Encounter

Our Bomb and Theirs

R. H. S. CROSSMAN
The Nuclear Obsession

PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE
How the Russians See it

YVES BONNEFOY
Critics— English and French

ABIOSEH NICOL
As the Night, the Day (A Story)

RICHARD ROUD
The Theatre on Trial

Impasse in the Holy Land

ERSKINE B. CHILDERS

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Encounter

edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* IRVING KRISTOL

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Our Bomb and Theirs (I)

The Nuclear Obsession

R. H. S. Crossman

I WANT to start this article where Joseph Alsop's contribution to the May number of ENCOUNTER broke off; and I can follow his "long, harsh cry of despair" the more easily because, though I reject his conclusion, I accept his analysis of the new balance of power. In particular:

(1) I agree with him that, since each side has sufficient retaliatory power to destroy the other, "nothing but one side's use of nuclear weapons will induce the other side to use these weapons."

(2) I further agree that this nuclear stalemate represents a triumph for the Kremlin and has already given the Russian leaders a new freedom to experiment in methods of expansion. I am not so sure, however, about the example Mr. Alsop gives of half a dozen Red Army parachute brigades, disguised as Moslem volunteers, being landed in Syria in order to avert an Israeli victory. Here I suspect that his imagination has induced him to over-dramatise a threat which is likely to be more insidious. But in essence his warning is correct. Nuclear retaliation, as a deterrent against anything except nuclear attack, has been rendered incredible, and so ineffective. We are left in a situation of extreme military and political weakness, which Mr. Khrushchev will not fail to exploit in one way or another.

(3) And, lastly, I agree with Mr. Alsop when he says that he does not greatly fear the ultimate horror of nuclear annihilation and argues that our real danger is Western retreat and surrender.

True enough, there is always a risk that a nuclear war might be started by an error of calculation or an act of individual madness. But this seems to me far less likely than a political catastrophe, resulting from an exhibition of brinkmanship. I foresee a situation in which the Western bluff is called and, since no adequate conventional forces are available, an American nuclear weapon has to be employed—say in Persia, a country to whose defence we are committed by the Baghdad Pact. If ever this happens, the British Government will be faced with the choice between accepting the virtual certainty of being H-bombed as an American base or renouncing responsibility for the American nuclear attack.

I am well aware that official as well as unofficial spokesmen have assured the world that the British people would commit national suicide rather than surrender to Communism. But these assertions do not convince me. Faced with this choice in reality, I believe that any government, whether Conservative or Labour, would feel bound to prevent the total destruction of its country by diplomatic reassurances to the Russians. This act of appeasement would begin the final disintegration of NATO, and the West would have to accept whatever terms were included in the Russian ultimatum that would follow. What I fear, in fact, is not nuclear annihilation but

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a nuclear Suez, followed by a nuclear Munich.

II

How can we avert this disaster? It was the scantiness of Mr. Alsop's answer to his own challenge which made his prophetic gloom on this occasion even more than usually inspissated. In a couple of hurried concluding paragraphs, he pleaded for a new "intellectual effort," for a new "military-fiscal effort" and, finally, for "new American leaders who are capable of rallying the West." "The leaders of the United States alone can make the needed preparations," he told us. "The leaders of the United States alone can create a new mood in the West."

If we really could only be saved by a new American leadership, the prospects would be black indeed. I find it difficult to envisage a genuinely new and dynamic American leadership until after the 1960 elections. Indeed, I draw the conclusion from Mr. Alsop's analysis that, for the last ten years, we on this side of the Atlantic have been far too placid in accepting American leadership and that, now the crisis is upon us, we should pull ourselves together and assume our full share of responsibility for meeting it.

I begin my search for an adequate British response to the challenge by observing that the new balance of power is not quite so new as Mr. Alsop suggests. What he describes as "the impossibility of using nuclear weapons first" goes back quite a long way. It is not a new, horrible weakness which has emerged as a result of the Russian Sputnik or even of the Russian H-bomb. It was there when some Americans wanted to use nuclear weapons in defence of Quemoy and Matsu, and during the Dien Bien Phu crisis. It was there even as long ago as December 1950—when it provided the background for Mr. Attlee's flight to Washington and General MacArthur's dismissal. It is, of course, true that, before Russian nuclear retaliatory power became strong enough to destroy Britain and devastate large portions of America, the idea of using nuclear weapons against a conventional attack by the Red Army was not completely imbecile. At this time it was still possible to envisage a nuclear war in which the Soviet Union would be smashed into surrender without any serious damage to Western civilisation. After all, this is what had actually happened in the summer of 1945, when Hiroshima was annihilated in order to achieve the surrender of Japan without incurring the losses which conventional landings would have brought. Nevertheless, a few men of vision saw even then that, once the American nuclear monopoly had been broken, a continued reliance on nuclear weapons would not strengthen the Western alliance but destroy it. They were derided by "responsible public opinion" in both Britain and America as weaklings and defeatists. Only in the last few months have such prominent advocates of nuclear strategy as Mr. Joseph Alsop begun to admit the truth of their predictions. That truth can be summarised in one proposition: *weapons of annihilation are no substitute for fighting soldiers.*

I can still remember the moment when this principle was first driven into my head. It was in Washington in the autumn of 1954, when I visited Admiral Strauss at the Atomic Energy Commission and he presented me with a copy of the full, half-million-word text of the Oppenheimer Transcript. I began reading it that night and for the next two days cancelled my interviews and read on and on, until I came to the interrogation of Mr. George Kennan.

Question: When it came time for you to give the Secretary of State your views, what did you report to him, and when was it approximately?

Mr. Kennan: I reported to him in the month of January, 1950. The gist of my own views was simply this: I felt that this Government was not in a good position to make any great decisions either with regard to the international control of atomic energy or with regard to its own weapons programme before it gained greater clarity as to the purposes for which it was holding what were sometimes called the A. B. C. weapons—the weapons of mass destruction. It seemed to me that there was unclarity in the councils of our Government, which revolved around this question. Were we holding these weapons only as a means of deterring other people from using them against us, or were we building them into our military establishment in such a way that we were going to be dependent

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upon them in any future war, and would have to use them, regardless of whether they were used against us first.... It was my belief that we should hold these weapons only for purposes of retaliation and as a deterrent to their use against us. Anything else would get us into a race with these mass destruction weapons to which I could see no end, which I was afraid would distort the thinking of the public mind about problems of foreign policy and military policy if it were permitted to proceed. So, as I say, I favoured the holding of these weapons only for purposes of retaliation and as a deterrent.

Question: Mr. Kennan, you will have to explain a little more to me what you conceived to be the relevance of clarifying this question to the question of whether or not we ought to proceed with making hydrogen bombs.

Mr. Kennan: As I saw it, the relevance was this. If you were asked, should we or should we not proceed to the development of a whole new range of more powerful atomic weapons, you had to ask yourself how much do we need the weapons of mass destruction in general.... If you were holding them as deterrents—in order that they might not be used against you—then you merely needed enough to make it an unprofitable undertaking for anyone else, the Russians in particular, to use these weapons against us. If, on the other hand, you were going to regard them as an integral part of forward American military planning and something on which we would be dependent in a future war, regardless of the circumstances of the origin of that war, then you came up with a different answer in regard to the hydrogen bomb.

And a little later in the interrogation the Chairman, Mr. Gray, puts the question in another way:

Mr. Gray: The atom bomb was many times as powerful as any explosive we had prior to its development. The same is true, I suppose, of the H-bomb. You had a serious question about proceeding with the H-bomb, but no question that we should have done what we did in developing the A-bomb. Is the difference in your attitude that a larger bomb would be unnecessarily large? Is that the distinction you make? Is it because the civilian population may be involved more deeply?

Mr. Kennan: It is because of the wonder on my part whether we did not already have enough of this sort of terrible ability to commit destruction.... To my mind the regular old bomb made a big enough bang, as big as anybody could want. What has worried me, Mr. Chairman, is that we would come to think of our security as embraced solely in the mathematics of whatever power of destruction we could evolve, and we would forget that our security lies still very largely in our ability to address ourselves to the positive and constructive problems of world affairs, to create confidence in other people. I am convinced that the best way to keep our allies around us is not to pay outwardly too much attention to the atomic weapons and to the prospect of war, but to come forward ourselves with plans that envisage the constructive and peaceful progress of humanity. I realise that while we do that we have to preserve an extremely alert and powerful defence posture at all times. But I believe in preserving that posture to the maximum, and talking about it to the minimum.

III

MR. KENNAN gave this testimony in the spring of 1954, but the views he then expressed had been presented to the Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, four years earlier, in January, 1950. All that has happened in the eight years since Mr. Truman decided to stake everything on the H-bomb has confirmed Mr. Kennan's prophecy. As he foresaw, American political and strategic thinking was perverted and blinded by a nuclear obsession, which later became sheer nuclear madness. Year by year, the United States became militarily weaker as more and more billions were spent on weapons which it is now admitted it is impossible to use, while production of equipment for the fighting Services was ruthlessly cut back. Year by year the Army's manpower has shrunk,* on the excuse that the reduction can be offset by the increased fire-power provided by nuclear tactical weapons—although the kind of tactical weapons required will not be available in bulk, either to the Americans or to NATO, in the next five years. As a result of the most expensive rearmament race in history, the United States now possesses (1) a Strategic Air Force capable of blowing the world to pieces

*

Army Strength	*Date*
1,596,000	1952
1,534,000	1953
1,404,066	1954
1,108,343	1955
1,024,887	1956
1,000,000	1957

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many times over, and (2) an Army of fifteen under-strength divisions, incapable of coping speedily and effectively even with a Korean-scale aggression without risking world destruction by turning it into a full-scale nuclear war.

As for the dollars to be spent in the next five years on nuclear missile development, they would be sufficient, if wisely invested in a world-wide Marshall Aid plan as part of a policy of disengagement, to make all Asia and Africa safe for democracy. The Indian Defence Minister, for example, recently went to Washington and stated that one billion dollars was required to save the second five-year plan from foundering. If that plan fails and India goes Communist, World War III will have been lost before it starts. Yet there were no dollars to spare for the Indians, and in 1958 the United States will spend ninety times more on military defence than on economic aid. No wonder Mr. Acheson observed recently, "The central point of concern to us is that the new Indian state shall succeed as a free state in an environment of freedom. Should it fail, disintegrate into confusion, collapse economically, as Indonesia seems to have done, the catastrophic consequences for Asia would be hard to exaggerate. . . . . Here, then, is the essence of India's—and Mr. Nehru's—plight. The United States and Europe, as well, have an interest, hard to overstate, in helping to solve it. There is nothing difficult about doing so. The West has the funds and plenty of industrial capacity to turn out the equipment required. What seem to be lacking are understanding of the urgent necessity and the will to act."

It is gratifying that Mr. Acheson should have seen this so clearly in the autumn of 1957. How much better, however, if he had seen it in the winter of 1949, when Mr. Kennan warned him what a disastrous effect the crash programme for the H-bomb would have on American foreign policy.

IV

IT WAS not until 1957 that the New Look strategy was adopted in London. Previously the British Government, under Mr. Attlee's and Mr. Churchill's leadership, had attempted, while developing British nuclear weapons, to counteract the extremism of American nuclear thinking. In particular, a real effort was made to strike a fair balance between the three great instruments of foreign policy—nuclear deterrents, conventional weapons, and economic aid. "Massive retaliation," when it was proclaimed by Mr. Dulles, was not welcomed on this side of the Atlantic. But in the spring of 1957, just six months after the collapse of the Suez venture, came the revelation that the Macmillan Government was trying to give Britain the capacity to go it alone—in a nuclear Suez. Mr. Duncan Sandys, who replaced Mr. Antony Head as Defence Minister after the Eden resignation, announced the Cabinet's conversion to "massive retaliation," and in the Defence White Paper of 1958 expressly asserted that thermonuclear weapons would be employed to stem a major Russian attack with conventional forces in Europe. Though the disastrous consequences of the American strategy were already becoming clear, Mr. Sandys repeated the whole American pattern. Reliance on nuclear weapons, he decided, would enable him to cut back the defence budget and slash Service manpower. Indeed, he went even further than Mr. Charles Wilson by actually promising that the last British call-up for national service would take place in 1960.

As a result of the Sandys defence policy, Britain is making herself incapable of conducting limited war or carrying out a speedy and effective police action in fulfilment of Commonwealth commitments. This is all the more remarkable when we bear in mind that the three theatres where the British must be prepared to undertake military operations in the next five years are the Persian Gulf, Singapore, and Central Africa. In none of these three is it easy to envisage circumstances where nuclear weapons could be employed without disastrous consequences to Britain. What are needed for the defence of British interests in these areas are small, highly mobile, conventional forces with modern equipment and the necessary air transport.

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The Suez fiasco revealed that such forces were not available. Yet, since then, no effort has been made to learn from the mistakes of Suez and to remedy the appalling deficiencies in conventional weapons there revealed. Instead, the plan to nuclearise Britain's defence forces has been carried on unchanged.

Meanwhile we have begun a withdrawal from Europe. At the precise moment when the new German Army had begun to expand rapidly, the decision was taken to cut back the British Army of the Rhine in order to concentrate on keeping Britain the Third Nuclear Power. So the obligations undertaken under the Paris Treaty are being tacitly repudiated, only three years after the Treaty was signed; and the British Government apparently contemplates with equanimity the dominance of Western Europe by the twelve German divisions, which will be ready in 1961. Thus Commonwealth and European security alike are being jeopardised in a frantic effort to build up a British H-bomb and the means of delivering it—although this nuclear deterrent can never be employed without causing the instant destruction of Britain.

V

How could policies which so disastrously weakened Western military strength be condoned by the politicians, by the Service Chiefs, and by the leaders of responsible public opinion? One part, at least, of the answer to this question is to be found in what I shall call the nuclear obsession—and the dogma of unlimited war into which it has been rationalised.

This obsession seems to me to be compounded of four motives. First, there is the characteristic Anglo-Saxon desire—prompted by memories of the mass slaughters of World War I—to discover techniques for achieving victory which saves the lives of our soldiers and if possible avoid old-fashioned war altogether. Not only do British and American fighting men demand a far higher standard of living in the field than Russian or Chinese soldiers. Even more important, they insist that they shall not be ordered to risk death in close combat if remote control methods of destroying the enemy are available. That is why, during and after World War II, our generals and politicians have felt morally justified in ordering the systematic annihilation of tens of thousands of enemy men, women, and children by strategic bombing. From this point of view, the atom bombs employed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not the first weapons of their kind but the apex of a development of which the R.A.F. raids on Hamburg and Dresden and the American fire raid which killed 100,000 Japanese in Tokyo were earlier stages. World War II taught the leaders of public opinion in Britain as well as America to denounce as squeamish sentimentalists those who questioned either the morality or the expediency of employing these techniques of mass annihilation by remote control. If any question were raised by a rare Christian—for example, the Bishop of Chichester, Dr. Bell—he was told that this was only retaliation in a total war, started by the totalitarians.

This was at best a half-truth. For the only nations which applied the theory of unlimited war really systematically were the British and Americans, with their gigantic strategic air forces. The Nazis and the Communists dabbled in terror raids on civilian targets. But they were old-fashioned and imperialist enough to hold that the aim of war is not to destroy the enemy but to defeat his armies in the field, to occupy his country, and to plunder its resources. That is why the totalitarian states both preferred to use air power not as a separate arm of (unlimited) war but as a tactical adjunct of land and sea operations, whereas the British and American strategic air commands were permitted to carry out their own quite separate and unsuccessful efforts to defeat Germany by strategic bombing. No wonder, therefore, that, as soon as the atomic bomb was dropped in Japan, it was accepted without difficulty by responsible public opinion in America and Britain as "the shield of Western civilisation." Here, it was felt, was the modern substitute for old-fashioned close combat, which would enable the democracies to disarm and yet to deter Communist aggression.

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Our acceptance of mass annihilation by remote control as a legitimate technique of self-defence was buttressed by two presuppositions. The first was the implicit assumption that the Western democracies, precisely because they are not aggressive, can only be safe if they possess the power of annihilating their aggressive enemies. A balance of power in which neither side could start a war with reasonable expectations of speedy victory has never been regarded in Washington or London as a sufficient guarantee of our security. That is why the Soviet Union has been ringed with American bomber bases and the Middle East (which in Russian strategy corresponds to Latin-America) has been integrated into the Western defence system. And when the Russians complained, as they did, that they were being encircled, our spokesmen would reply quite sincerely that the encirclement was purely a matter of self-defence.

The claim that our security could only be assured by our capacity to annihilate the Soviet Union was strengthened by a second presupposition—that the Russians would always be behind the West in technological development and therefore unable ever to retaliate in kind. Even to-day, after the launching of the third Russian Sputnik, many Americans still believe that, with one great effort, it should be possible to regain the lead in the nuclear arms race and to retain it indefinitely. It was this delusion which made them swallow the idea that weapons of annihilation could render obsolete old-fashioned war and the need for fighting soldiers. In the years immediately after 1945, this tendency to sublimate nuclear weapons was so strong that even Bertrand Russell argued that we should bring the Russians to their senses by threatening to punish them with atomic bombardment if they were recalcitrant. Militarists and pacifists were able to unite in agreement that here was a technique for defending civilisation which abolished war, or at least made it unnecessary.

The fourth motive in the nuclear obsession was—economy. As soon as it was clear that World War II had been followed not by peace but by a cold war which might last for fifty years, the problems of cost became increasingly important in Anglo-American planning. One can fight a war regardless of cost, because it is assumed that it won't last very long. But, in the cold war, the taxpayer is not so obliging. In both Britain and America the parties of the Left made their electoral defeat certain by committing themselves to the Korean war and the gigantic peace-time rearmament it necessitated. In both countries the parties of the Right, the "patriotic" parties, after assuming power have cut back the defence budgets in order to reduce the ever-growing burden of taxation. To fiscal was added manpower economy. National service is unpopular in all democracies (though not nearly as unpopular as many politicians imagine). If defence economies had to be carried through, it was obviously more popular to save on old-fashioned war and fighting soldiers than on modern techniques of annihilation.

Four powerful motives, therefore, worked together to produce this nuclear obsession, which has proved strong enough to blind responsible public opinion in Britain and America to the dangers into which we are drifting. The hope of achieving lasting security by relying on the new techniques of annihilation was turned into a rational conviction by the assumption that our technological superiority would prevent these weapons ever being turned against us; and this conviction became almost irresistible to the practical politician when he realised that it could "sold" to the electorate as a method of achieving an up-to-date defence on the cheap, and incidentally getting rid of the unpopular burden of conscription.

Two of the gravest results of this nuclear obsession have been the hostility it created throughout the uncommitted nations and its demoralising effect on public opinion in the NATO countries, particularly Britain and Western Germany. The trouble has not been caused by the fact that the West employs nuclear weapons (the Soviet Union does this as well) but by the extraordinary hotch potch

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of justifications—moral, political, and military—put forward by official spokesmen of Governments and Oppositions alike. As a result, quite unnecessary strength has been given to the pacifist and neutralist movements which are able to expose the moral and strategic claptrap with which "Massive Retaliation" was sold to the electorate. Even if it provided the West with an effective military defence (as it failed to do), this advantage would have been more than offset by the political and psychological defeats which its propagandists have brought upon us.

Yet, in London and Washington, responsible men still cling to these doctrines, and the strength of the nuclear obsession was only fully revealed when Henry Kissinger published his *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. Here we can read a complete and terrifying exposure of "massive retaliation" both in theory and in practice. Yet, instead of ridding himself of the nuclear obsession and turning back to a sane and balanced strategy, Mr. Kissinger proceeded to evolve a new and even more fantastic argument for continuing to give nuclear weapons first priority. Limited war, he solemnly told us, could only be won by the West if it evolved a technique of limited annihilation by means of atomic tactical weapons. And last October, Mr. Dulles seemed to give the new strategy of "graduated deterrence" his imprimatur in an article in *Foreign Affairs*.

In his *Power and Diplomacy*, Dean Acheson has demolished "graduated deterrence" at least as effectively as Mr. Kissinger demolished "massive retaliation." Even more recently (in the *New Statesman* of 17th May, 1958), Professor Blackett joined in.

"I think this argument is plain poppycock. First we rely on our atomic monopoly to offset the greater number of Soviet soldiers. When the atomic monopoly is lost, we rely on having more bombs. When numbers become unimportant, we rely on better bombs. When this technical superiority is lost, we rely on the supposed superior quality of the few individual soldiers we do have. Superiority in character, as in weapons, is something to be trained and worked for; but it should not be counted upon in planning. I conclude from this analysis that if tactical nuclear weapons were used by both sides in Europe, it is by no means certain they would favour the West. I would go further and hold that the NATO forces, even in their present state, would probably put up a better defence if neither side used nuclear weapons than if both did."

So far, however, rational argument has not been successful in breaking the nuclear obsession. American strategy is still dominated by it, and the British Government is still following the American lead.

VI

I SEE little chance that this American attitude will be rapidly altered and, if a lead had to come from the U.S.A., I would share Mr. Joseph Alsop's despair. Fortunately this is not the case. For, whereas the nuclear obsession is deeply rooted in the American environment, it is foreign to Britain. Moreover, the strategies of "massive retaliation" and "graduated deterrents" are so blatantly inapplicable to our defence requirements and so clearly beyond our economic resources that criticism of them is already widespread among the most well-informed of the Government's supporters. Public opinion also is becoming sceptical about the prospects of survival in the nuclear arms race and insists that any Government, whatever its party, should make a genuine effort to achieve co-existence by negotiation. We are a nation, therefore, which can still rid itself of the nuclear obsession and adopt a balanced foreign and defence policy.

The outlines of such a policy should be clear from the foregoing analysis.

(1) Our main aim in NATO should be to counterweigh the American nuclear obsession by a more balanced approach. We should insist that NATO strategy should be based on the assumption of Russian technological parity, and warn the Americans that the West will never again be able to counter an inferiority in fighting effectives by a superiority in weapons of annihilation.

(2) In putting this strategy into practice, Britain should set an example by herself giving first priority to the provision of the full

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British contribution to NATO. This should consist of our best units, who should be trained to stand up to conventional attack without expecting to rely on nuclear weapons. It should be noted that only units trained in this way are of any use in fulfilling British Commonwealth commitments. In Europe too it would be perfectly possible, if Britain gave the lead, to provide a NATO army capable of deterring any possible Russian aggression without relying on nuclear weapons.

(3) In particular, we should tell the Americans that, whatever they may do, Britain will not rely, for at least another five years, on new nuclear tactical weapons which are either purely experimental or still in the development stage. This should give us time to create the necessary functional command to control all nuclear weapons at the disposal of NATO. We should point out that, before such a command is created, nuclear tactical weapons are nothing more than a bluff, since, if ever their use were contemplated by the Supreme Commander, it would be vetoed by one at least of the fourteen sovereign governments which make up the NATO Council.

(4) In order to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, Britain should propose to her European allies in NATO a ten-year pact, under which she renounces the production of nuclear weapons, on condition that all other members of NATO, with the exception of the United States, does the same.

(5) We should seek to get formal agreement in NATO that economic aid to Asia and Africa is of no less importance in the defence of the West than the maintenance of our military establishments.

Once a British initiative had persuaded NATO to adopt this attitude to defence, it would be possible to enter negotiations with the Russians in an entirely new spirit. From the recognition that nuclear weapons are now only a deterrent against nuclear weapons would follow at once a Western willingness to halt further nuclear development by a ban on further nuclear tests. So too the establishment of a functional nuclear command in NATO would make disengagement possible. With such a command in existence, we could envisage West Germany leaving NATO and becoming part of a neutralised belt without the collapse of Western defences. For we can only begin to achieve real security for the Western democracies when we have rid ourselves of the nuclear obsession.

Robin Everard

On a Young Girl seen in the Zoo

There was I an old man with a dirty mind,
lame in one leg and in one eye blind;
caged in a useless job with a graceless wife,
tired of living but still full of life
and there was she with long fair hair
carefree grace and a laughing air.

I know now tigers feel no rage
pacing endlessly round their cage
only despair, despair, despair.

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Our Bomb and Theirs (II)

How the Russians See It

Peregrine Worsthorne

IT IS difficult to read Soviet military journals to-day without being impressed by the calm, matter-of-fact way in which they discuss the problems of war. Their strategic thinkers show no signs of being either inhibited or dismayed by the H-bomb. It does not even dominate their debates. For them, thermonuclear war is just one of several ways in which meaningful victory might be gained. They would prefer to rely on conventional weapons, because of their massive superiority in this field; and by their Herculean efforts to achieve thermonuclear parity, they also hope to impose this preference on the West as well. But they do not rely on this, rightly recognising that in the last resort the choice of weapons is something which the Soviet Union cannot alone determine. If, therefore, the West insists, the Soviet generals are prepared to fight a thermonuclear war—which they also believe they can not only survive but actually win.

When they write of "victory," they do not mean, as does the West, a mere avoidance of defeat. They have in mind a victory that would result in the spread of Communist control over the conquered area. This positive conception of victory governs the nature of Soviet strategy, just as the West's negative conception—the mere avoidance of defeat and the endurance of "co-existence"—governs *its* strategy. As a result, the Soviets believe, as a cardinal principle, that the primary purpose of military operations, as much in the thermonuclear age as before, is the destruction of hostile military forces and not the annihilation of the enemy's population and economic resources. They do not want Communism to inherit a radioactive desert.

In contrast, because the West has no positive war aims, being essentially defensive, its basic strategic thinking is designed to prevent war, rather than win it. Western generals have been ordered to develop a military posture which will make war impossible. If war breaks out, therefore, they will have failed in their central task. It is perfectly logical, given the West's basic aims, that its strategy should be overtly terroristic, aimed less at destroying the enemy's armed forces than at annihilating his population and economy. Having no acquisitive war aims, the West is not concerned with the fruits of conquest. That they should be damaged beyond the point of recovery is not the inevitable by-product of their strategy but its central objective. For the more certain it is that no side can win a thermonuclear war, the more likely is it that a policy of deterrence will succeed.

Viewed strictly from a military standpoint, then, it can be said that the Soviets, because of their positive war aims, have developed a constructive strategy, while the West, because of its negative war aims, has developed a destructive strategy. But, it may well be asked, is not a constructive, positive thermonuclear strategy a contradiction in terms?

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Can thermonuclear victory be anything other than mutual defeat? Has not the H-bomb ruled out all possibility of victory in the sense of one side actually gaining more than it loses —which is the only meaningful sense? The Soviet answer to these questions is: No.

IT USED to be fashionable in the West to reply that Soviet complacency over the Bomb was little more than a compound of ideological obscurantism, technical ignorance, and political opportunism. During Stalin's day, this Western reaction was clearly justified. Because the West at that time enjoyed, first a nuclear monopoly and later a thermonuclear superiority, it was only natural that the Soviets should refuse to admit the decisive nature of these new weapons. To have done otherwise would not only have placed the Soviet Union at an intolerable diplomatic and military disadvantage, but Communism as an ideology would have been forced to eat its favourite words. For how could the Communist world accept the implications of a decisive weapon in the hands of its enemies without being forced to qualify its belief in the inevitable triumph of Communism? Furthermore, it was always possible then that the Soviets might have been plain ignorant. Not having the full facts about nuclear weapons themselves, they may, understandably enough, have been reluctant to accept the American assessment of their destructiveness, when it so clearly served the West's ends to exaggerate.

To-day, however, the development of Sputnik reveals that Soviet scientists are quite as knowledgeable as their Western rivals. If, therefore, Soviet strategists differ from American strategists, it is not because of the inferior quality of their technical information. Achievement of thermonuclear parity has also removed the earlier sense of military inadequacy and vulnerability. To admit now that H-bomb warfare would destroy both parties to the exchange, would not necessarily weaken the Soviet Union. Indeed, by confirming the West's own apocalyptic attitude to these weapons, it might encourage mutual reliance on conventional weapons, in which the Soviet Union enjoys such a superiority.

It is possible, of course, that by pretending that they are certain to win even if the United States does have recourse to H-bombs, the Soviets hope to make the use of such weapons seem fruitless. This policy of bluff might be sufficient to explain Soviet *propaganda*. But Soviet behaviour goes far beyond propaganda. The Russian government is spending vast sums of money on maintaining massive land armies trained and equipped to fight a thermonuclear war, as well as a conventional one. They would hardly go to these lengths if their belief in a protracted but ultimately successful thermonuclear war was mere bluff.

AS IN all Soviet policies, ideological compulsions cannot be ignored. It may well be that admission of a thermonuclear stalemate is as ideologically unpalatable to Mr. Khrushchev to-day as admission of inferiority was to Stalin yesterday. The latter posed the possibility of the defeat of Communism, which was sheer heresy. The former denies the possibility of victory, which is scarcely less heretical. But at the celebrated Twentieth Party Congress, Mr. Khrushchev seemed to solve this doctrinal embarrassment by declaring that Communism would inevitably triumph, even without recourse to war, through its own innate economic and political momentum. So even if the thermonuclear stalemate were to be admitted, this would not involve any necessary contradiction of the basic belief in Communism's ultimate triumph over capitalism.

Yet the fact remains that the deadlock has *not* been admitted. Mr. Malenkov, who once made so bold as to do so, was swiftly forced to retract. It may be, of course, that this retraction seemed necessary on exclusively ideological grounds which had nothing to do with military thinking at all. Certainly Soviet policy showed then, and still shows, a marked reluctance to admit anything that might reduce the full dynamism of the original doctrine. But there is also much written evidence to show that Malenkov's reference to a military deadlock outraged the generals

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quite as much as the Party dialecticians. The generals appeared to be genuinely reluctant to concede a deadlock because they simply did not believe that a deadlock existed. They argued that to accept a stalemate would be contrary to the thermonuclear facts, as well as to the Marxist fictions. It would deny the Red army real military advantages, not only ideological reassurances.

The West, therefore, would be making a serious mistake if it attributed the present buoyancy and flexibility of current Soviet military thinking either to ignorance, bluff, or ideological necessity. Ideological absolutes may play a part, as may old-fashioned prejudices in a General Staff deeply wedded by history and the experience of the Second World War to a belief in the ultimate value of mass land armies. Nor can diplomatic and political bluff be entirely ruled out. But none of these factors, even in aggregate, strike one as altogether convincing. There is, alas, a further possibility which certainly deserves far more attention than the West seems prepared to give it: namely, that the Soviets' strategic confidence and flexibility indicates a new realism, a fresh and more modern approach, with which the West has not yet begun to catch up.

THAT this is a real possibility is confirmed by an excellent recent study of current Soviet military thinking.* Its author, Raymond L. Garthoff, a prominent authority on this highly esoteric subject, traces the development of Soviet military thinking from its early ostrich-like, head-in-the-sand approach during Stalin's era to its present open-eyed, unblinking appraisal of the thermonuclear scene. The conclusion that emerges is of a contemporary military doctrine which has jumped from the conditions of the Second World War straight to the thermonuclear age, without ever getting bogged down in the intermediate and essentially temporary phase when one side enjoyed a nuclear monopoly.

In the years when Western strategists were enraptured by the siren songs about a miracle weapon, their Soviet counterparts were tied by Stalinist ropes to the mast of old-fashioned mass-army orthodoxy. But Stalin's policy of repressing the truth paid off, because what was temporarily true then—the absolute value of the bomb—is no longer true now that both sides possess it. While the West is still obsessed by the earlier truth, remembering the earlier examples of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—which Stalin never allowed to make any impact on Russian opinion—the Soviet strategists have been able to come entirely fresh to the contemporary truth: that thermonuclear parity has revolutionised earlier nuclear strategic thinking quite as profoundly as the United States monopoly of the nuclear weapon revolutionised conventional, pre-nuclear strategy.

It would, of course, be absurd to pretend that Western strategy has not recognised the profound implications of thermonuclear parity. But the mood in which this recognition has been made is subtly different from that in the Soviet Union. The West, having convinced itself in 1945 that the A-bomb was an absolute weapon, and that future major war would follow the Hiroshima pattern—which was then the case—has simply extended this picture to cover the new situation brought about by the Soviet Union's development of similar weapons. These weapons are still seen as absolute. The only difference now is that we assume that, because both sides possess them, neither can afford to use them. From being the miraculous determinants of war, they have become, in Western eyes, the miraculous deterrents of war.

But the seed from which this obsession has grown was originally sown in 1945, when the strategic soil was still unfertilised by later developments. The Soviet Union, having refused to consider the problem when American monopoly did make the A-bomb an absolute weapon, thereby escaped the initial obsession with a strategy of annihilation. It sees parity to-day not so much as a hardening of the deadlock as an opportunity for exploiting their natural advantage in mass land armies. Without wishing to exaggerate what

* *Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age*. By RAYMOND L. GARTHOFF. Atlantic Books. 35s.

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is in essence a difference in psychological approach, one can say that Stalin's head-in-the-sand policy has resulted, quite inadvertently, in Soviet military thinking being tailored to the last half of the 1950's, while the West still harks back to the last half of the 1940's. Just as German industry has enormously benefited by enforced modernity, so also has Soviet military thinking.

But there is another reason, too, which helps to explain the degree of flexibility which the Soviet generals clearly believe themselves to enjoy. They are not frightened of mass destruction. The West tends to forget that the initial losses suffered by the Soviet Union in the last war compare in size with those that they might expect to lose in the opening phase of a thermonuclear war. In visualising the image of a future war, and calculating on its conduct beyond the first phase, the Soviets cannot but recall that they suffered in a relately brief period in 1941 the loss of control over 40 per cent. of their population, 40 per cent. of their grain production, approximately 60 per cent. of their coal, iron, steel, and aluminium output, and 95 per cent. or more of certain key military industries such as ball-bearing production. They lost four million soldiers dead, wounded, or prisoner, and over two-thirds of their tanks and aircraft—yet they survived, and won perhaps the most fruitful victory in the history of war.* The West cannot conceive of surviving anything on the scale of thermonuclear destruction. The Russians can, because they already have.

So not only are they free from the stultifying belief that the next war must be thermonuclear (because they possess the means to fight conventional war as well), but they are also spared the despairing conviction that if thermonuclear war does come it means the end of everything. It is possible, of course, that both these assumptions are illusory. If the West is really serious when it says that it intends to make any war thermonuclear *à outrance*, then perhaps the Soviet Union is wasting time and money on maintaining mass land armies. Again, it may be wrong to imagine that thermonuclear war is in any way comparable to anything that has gone before, however horrible. Yet, in reading Soviet military writings, the suspicion constantly intrudes that perhaps they see the future more clearly than we do ourselves.

* Mr. Garthoff's figures.

WHAT, then, is the Soviet image of thermonuclear war? Here is Mr. Garthoff's brief summary:

"The initial strategic strikes by modern jet bombers, inter-continental and intermediate range rockets and missiles, will wreak devastation upon both the United States, and upon their chief allies. But does mutual devastation spell mutual defeat? The Soviets answer: No. The priority strikes will destroy the enemy's strategic air and missile bases in so far as these are known. Major cities and industrial centres, on a lower level of priority, will also suffer heavily. Radiological and bacteriological weapons may also be used. But this enormous mutual destruction will probably consume the major proportion of the respective air and long-range missile forces. Thus the effort of these forces would in a sense cancel each other out. This is a *crucial* phase of the war, one which a weak or ill-prepared power could lose. But it is not the *decisive* stage of a war between well-prepared major powers; it does not determine the final outcome of the war between them.

"Tactical air power and rockets, those forces designated to attack the enemy's military forces up to roughly a 1,000-mile range from the starting borders, would similarly engage in mutual nuclear strikes. But here the Soviets do not see a mutual stalemate. The heart of such a capability is the ground forces—trained for nuclear war, armed with nuclear weapons—and here the war would begin with serious unbalance: a preponderance of Soviet forces. Moreover, in the Soviet view, their mobilisation and despatch of ground forces would be much less critically disrupted than would ours by the nuclear exchange, *due to their larger force in being* and to its deployment. The surviving Soviet land armies are thus expected to be capable of defeating the proportionately weakened enemy forces on the ground. Thus the Soviets would strive to achieve *at least* a favourable draw by occupying the Eurasian continent and exploiting such resources as might still be available to restore some of the Soviet Union's losses. The shrunken and devastated free world would be entirely relegated to the Western hemisphere.

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"In the major theatre, central-western Europe, the Soviets would expect to defeat the NATO forces and to occupy the territory at least to the Channel and the Pyrenees. Soviet intermediate and long-range air and missile forces would not only strive to knock out SAC and British Bomber Command strength in the U.K., Spain, and North Africa, and Turkey, but also effectively to interdict (with submarine action) any supply of men and material from the United States. Scandinavia and the Balkans would fall.

"In the Middle East and Far East those countries allied with the West would be seized by exploiting local Soviet and Chinese superiorities in a situation where the mutual strategic exchange would have denied the U.S. the ability to bring in sufficient additional strength to prevent their advance. The neutrals would be left, at least for a time, on sufferance; local Communists would probably ride to power on the swell of victory."

It is clear from the above sketch, as Mr. Garthoff goes on to point out, that the Soviets now fully recognise, as during Stalin's day they did not, the vital importance of tremendous inter-continental striking power, and its corollary of home defence to weaken the enemy's long-range attack. Here they are at one with the Americans. But it is also clear that they consider as equally important the maintenance of large, nuclear-equipped land armies, with supporting air, missile, and naval forces. They continue, in other words, to believe in protracted land campaigns, even in a thermonuclear war. Here they are by no means at one with the West which, although continuing to talk of "broken-backed" warfare, is now in no position to implement such a strategy.

IT WOULD be comforting to believe that this Soviet image of future war reflected a time lag, a harking back to a period when nuclear and thermonuclear weapons were far less destructive than they are to-day. Some Western commentators have indeed dismissed this Soviet picture as being little more than a slightly modernised but still fantastically out-of-date version of Stalin's strategic straitjacket, which imposed on Soviet generals, as a matter of faith, belief in the five "constant" causes of victory—home-front stability, army morale, quantity and quality of divisions, armament of the armed forces, and ability of the army commanders—in all five of which, according to the doctrine, a Communist state must be superior to a capitalist state. But nobody reading Soviet military journals to-day can believe that the revolution of fire-power wrought by nuclear weapons has not been taken into consideration. The same prominent general, for example, who in one sentence declares that atomic and thermonuclear weapons "only supplement the fire-power of the old forms of armament . . . which remain the basic fire-power of the army," goes on to say in another sentence that "in contemporary major wars atomic and thermonuclear weapons may be employed in quantities of hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands."

One may dispute the realistic compatibility of these two statements, but in the context of Soviet military doctrine they are not at all contradictory. Mr. Garthoff poses the issue squarely. Can the West be certain, he asks, that, under conditions of reciprocal and mutual nuclear saturation, the "decisive rôle of the old classical light armaments" will not be preserved? And is it but a symptom of backwardness to stress the need for large reserves to replace units destroyed by hostile atomic strikes? Mutual thermonuclear destruction may be the last thing we care to contemplate—but is it only a lag to face up to this and say, as the Russians do: mutual nuclear strikes "may indeed result in equal losses to both combatants. But from such equality it still does not follow that the war balances out and ends without victory. . . . Operational balance or equality achieved by reciprocal atomic blows will be broken to the advantage of one side or another." A future war might be won in days; but if it were not, would the side which had planned on a long war be guilty of lagging behind?

Western commentators used to find it easy to evade answering these queries by dwelling on the total absence in Soviet strategy of any emphasis on the element of surprise, a lacuna dating back to Stalin's idealisation of the five "constant factors." It is perfectly true that in Stalin's day the Soviet Union did emphasise

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the importance of land armies and minimise the importance of surprise, because they were strong in the former and weak in the latter. But this is no longer the case. If they believed in the initial surprise attack being decisive they could easily build their strategy around it. Indeed, lacking the moral scruples which inhibit the West from launching surprise attacks, they could exploit this element far more effectively than their enemies—if they believed in it. But the unquestionable fact is they do not believe in surprise as a decisive element. They do not believe that reliance on surprise is any substitute for maintaining mass land armies, or that getting the first blow in from the air constitutes a decisive advantage. After the most extensive re-appraisal, their considered verdict is that surprise can gain a battle but not win a war.

THE implications of this conclusion are far-reaching, and constitute the second basic cause of Soviet confidence. Just as the Soviet Union is convinced that it cannot hope to knock out the West by a super-Pearl Harbour, so it is equally convinced that the United States cannot knock out the U.S.S.R. by similar means. In other words, this basic strategic conclusion allows them to risk launching a major war with conventional weapons, in which they have a decisive superiority. If they are lucky, and the gamble succeeds, their known parity in thermonuclear weapons will deter the U.S. from retaliating with an H-bomb strike. But if they are unlucky and the gamble fails, the fact that the United States unleashes the first H-bomb strike will not prove a decisive set-back, since thermonuclear surprise is, in their opinion, only a marginal advantage.

It would, of course, be quite wrong to conclude from the Soviets' confidence in victory, even in a thermonuclear war, that they would lightly embark on such a struggle. As I pointed out earlier, their strategy is governed by a political—rather than a mere military—aim: namely, the triumph of Communism. With such an objective in mind, no Soviet leader in his senses would lightly choose to initiate a war which, even at the most conservative estimate, would involve the risk of crippling destruction. Having convinced themselves that little is to be gained by a sudden and devastating thermonuclear attack, the Soviets would, according to their present strategic thinking, only initiate thermonuclear war if convinced that the enemy were themselves about to do likewise. In these circumstances—and these alone—the Soviets might well seek to get their H-bomb strike in first, but it is clear from everything they write that this would be fundamentally against the grain of their current strategic preference.

But should the West draw comfort from this? In one sense, it would seem to justify their present policy of thermonuclear deterrence. So long as the West makes it technically impossible for Russia to launch a decisive first blow, and at the same time declares its unswerving determination to resist any major attack—even if it is only with conventional weapons—by retaliating with an H-bomb, then surely the Soviet Union, in spite of its belief in the possibility of thermonuclear victory, will not think it worthwhile to commit aggression. In other words, by remaining absolutely rigid, capable of fighting any major war with nuclear weapons, the West, it is hoped, has checkmated the Soviet Union's preference for flexibility. The essence of checkmate, however, is that it should allow the opponent no loopholes. Yet, seen from the Soviet side, thermonuclear deterrence is riddled with loopholes.

FIRST, the Soviet Union does not necessarily believe that the U.S. will use the H-bomb, especially now that New York, Boston, and San Francisco would be the certain victims of such a policy. This element of doubt about American intentions is strengthened by a consideration which is scarcely ever noticed in Western writings on this question. One of the corollaries of Russia's immense emphasis on land armies is that her leaders have been forced to recognise their inability, in present circumstances, to conquer the United States. This is an objective outside the range of their present strategic compass. If they placed greater reliance on the decisive

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nature of air power, then conquest of the United States might seem possible. But, on the record of their current thinking, there is nothing that the Russians could do which would constitute a mortal, decisive challenge to the United States. This, at any rate, is what they believe. It is, in their opinion, the one major weakness of their current military posture. But, ironically enough, this Russian assessment of their particular weakness strikes a deadly blow at what the West likes to regard as its own particular strength. For if the Russians do not believe that there is anything they can do which constitutes a mortal threat to the United States, is it likely that they would believe the American threat to have recourse to weapons which, according to American thinking, would involve irrecoverable damage to the United States itself?

In other words, the whole mood of Russian strategic thinking tends to undermine the efficacy of the West's policy of thermonuclear deterrence. Faced by what, in Soviet thinking, are merely limited losses (the American continent, at the very least, being unassailable by Soviet conventional weapons) the temptation for the American leaders to refrain from dropping H-bombs might well appear, to the Russian leaders, as irresistible. This reaction would be all the more likely since the Soviet Union, by initial non-use, would have shown an alternative—albeit one that involved limited defeat—to the vastly more unpalatable prospect of mutual destruction by thermonuclear assaults.*

The second loophole is even more serious. The Soviet generals are not only sceptical about the likelihood of the Americans implementing their thermonuclear threat. They are also unconvinced of the efficacy of the threat even if implemented. Even if the dread eventuality of a mutual thermonuclear exchange does take place, the Soviets clearly believe that their subsequent gains in Europe and the Middle and Far East, assured by superior land and sea forces, will make good the losses suffered in Russia itself. This confidence would not, of course, encourage them to initiate thermonuclear war. But it might encourage them to initiate conventional war, because the risk of defaulting to American initiative in thermonuclear weapons is not regarded in Moscow as wholly unacceptable. The gains of non-use might seem so great, the possibility of mutual deterrence so large, and the price of the gamble failing so relatively bearable, as to make this strategy attractive.

IT WOULD, therefore, seem highly dangerous for the West to place too much reliance on the certainty of thermonuclear deterrence. Nor does the alternative doctrine of limited nuclear war seem a satisfactory answer to the challenge of Soviet strategic thinking. For in spite of Soviet refusal to admit the feasibility of limited nuclear warfare, their armed forces appear to be fully adaptable to these tactics. Clearly, so long as there is a chance of limiting warfare exclusively to conventional weapons, in which they have a clear superiority, the Russians will not even consider the possibility of limited nuclear war. But the fact remains that they are already in a position to fight such a war, and it is difficult to see how their superiority on the ground would not make victory for them quite as certain in limited nuclear war as in conventional war—so long as the balance of military man-power still remains as greatly in their favour as it is to-day.

None of this, as I say, should lead to the conclusion that the Soviet Union is likely to commit aggression. As Mr. Khrushchev is fond of pointing out, Communism is winning anyhow, through subversion, economic penetration, and the momentum of its—to them—obviously superior social system. All I have been attempting to show is that they believe they have evolved a military strategy that can

* Britain's possession of an H-bomb does, of course, present the Russians with an additional problem. For while a conventional attack in Europe does not constitute a decisive and immediate mortal threat to the United States, it certainly does to the United Kingdom. The possibility, therefore, that the British would retaliate with an H-bomb strike, even if the Americans did not, cannot be ruled out. But even here the Russians might well be expected to have serious doubts. Certainly the reception given in this country to Mr. Sandys' White Paper policy was anything but unanimous.

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win, not that they are eager to put it into operation.

Yet even if the basic pacific intentions are granted, the fact that the West's potential enemy believes itself to possess the secret of victory is itself a cause for grave concern. It must surely vastly affect the buoyancy of their diplomacy, the degree of risks they are prepared to take, and the tone of voice with which they feel it safe to address the world. In gambling, the rich man who feels he can afford to raise the stakes is always at an advantage over the poor man who knows he cannot afford to take the risk. From a reading of Soviet military journals, one dominant conclusion emerges: they still believe that, even in the thermonuclear era, mass land armies are the key to successful strategy. They have this key; the West does not.

Whether or not the Soviet Union is right, the West cannot afford to overlook this basic belief. For thermonuclear deterrence, on which the West entirely relies, is a psychological weapon. If it is irrelevant to the climate of Soviet strategic thought, it is no more effective than the bow and arrow.

Stevie Smith

The Vision

These before the worlds in congress
Stood to sing their songs in song-dress,
Never one was in a wrong dress
Never one was out of tune.

Oh it filled my heart with pity
As, so serious and pretty,
Stood my Race to sing its ditty,
Unsolicited.

The worlds were quite indifferent
As to how the singing went,
If the Race were elegant
They did not care.

But still the people stood and chanted
For to chant was all they wanted,
So their bravery was vaunted
Emptily, emptily.

Yet I was proud to see their singing,
Proud the human race was flinging
Such a song at such a ceiling
Gustily

Then it vanished all away,
Worlds and singers went away;
Nothing now is left to say
But this: it was a vision.

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Abioseh Nicol

As the Night, the Day

KOJO and Bandele walked slowly across the hot green lawn, holding their science manuals with moist fingers. In the distance they could hear the junior school collecting in the hall of the main school building, for singing practice. Nearer, but still farther enough, their classmates were strolling towards them. The two reached the science block and entered it. It was a low building set apart from the rest of the High School which sprawled on the hillside of the African savannah. The laboratory was a longish room and, at one end, they saw Basu, another boy, looking out of the window, his back turned to them. Mr. Abu, the ferocious laboratory attendant, was not about. The rows of multicoloured bottles looked inviting. A Bunsen burner soughed loudly in the heavy weary heat. Where the tip of the light blue triangle of flame ended, a shimmering plastic transparency started. One could see the restless hot air moving in the minute tornado. The two African boys watched it, interestedly, holding hands.

"They say it is hotter inside the flame than on its surface," Kojo said, doubtfully. "I wonder how they know?"

"I think you mean the opposite; let's try it ourselves," Bandele answered.

"How?"

"Let's take the temperature inside."

"All right, here is a thermometer. You do it."

"It says ninety degrees now. I shall take the temperature of the outer flame first, then you can take the inner yellow one."

Bandele held the thermometer gently forward to the flame and Kojo craned to see. The thin thread of quicksilver shot upwards within the stem of the instrument with swift malevolence and there was a slight crack. The stem had broken. On the bench the small bulbous drops of mercury which had spilled from it shivered with glinting, playful malice and shuddered down to the cement floor, dashing themselves into a thousand shining pieces, some of which coalesced again and shook gaily as if with silent laughter.

"Oh my God!" Kojo whispered hoarsely.

"Shut up!" Bandele said, imperiously in a low voice.

Bandele swept the few drops on the bench into his cupped hand and threw the blob of mercury down the sink. He swept those on the floor under an adjoining cupboard with his bare feet. Then, picking up the broken halves of the thermometer, he tiptoed to the waste-bin and dropped them in. He tiptoed back to Kojo, who was standing petrified by the blackboard.

"See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil," he whispered to Kojo.

It all took place in a few seconds. Then the rest of the class started pouring in, chattering and pushing each other. Basu, who had been at the end of the room with his back turned to them all the time, now turned round and limped laboriously across to join the class, his eyes screwed up as they always were.

The class ranged itself loosely in a semicircle around the demonstration platform. They were dressed in the school uniform of

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white shirt and khaki shorts. Their official age was around sixteen although, in fact, it ranged from Kojo's fifteen years to one or two boys of twenty-one.

Mr. Abu, the laboratory attendant, came in from the adjoining store and briskly cleaned the blackboard. He was a retired African sergeant from the Army Medical Corps and was feared by the boys. If he caught any of them in any petty thieving, he offered them the choice of a hard smack on the bottom or of being reported to the science masters. Most boys chose the former as they knew the matter would end there, with no protracted interviews, moral recrimination, and an entry in the conduct book.

The science master stepped in and stood on his small platform. A tall, thin, dignified Negro with greying hair and silver-rimmed spectacles badly fitting on his broad nose and always slipping down, making him look avuncular. "Vernier" was his nickname as he insisted on exact measurement and exact speech "as fine as a vernier scale," he would say, which measured, of course, things in thousandths of a millimetre. Vernier set the experiments for the day and demonstrated them; then retired behind the *Church Times* which he read seriously in between walking quickly down the aisles of lab-benches advising boys. It was a simple heat experiment to show that a dark surface gave out more heat by radiation than a bright surface.

DURING the class, Vernier was called away to the telephone and Abu was not about, having retired to the lavatory for a smoke. As soon as a posted sentinel announced that he was out of sight, minor pandemonium broke out. Some of the boys raided the store. The wealthier ones swiped rubber tubing to make catapults and to repair bicycles, and helped themselves to chemicals for developing photographic films. The poorer boys were in deadlier earnest and took only things of strict commercial interest which could be sold easily in the market. They emptied stuff into bottles in their pockets. Soda for making soap, magnesium sulphate for opening-medicine, salt for cooking, liquid paraffin for women's hairdressing, and fine yellow iodoform powder much in demand for sprinkling on sores.

Kojo protested mildly against all this. "Oh, shut up!" a few boys said. Sorie, a huge boy who always wore a fez cap indoors and who, rumour said, had already fathered a child, commanded respect and some leadership in the class. He was sipping his favourite mixture of dilute alcohol and bicarbonate—which he called "gin and fizz"—from a beaker. "Look here, Kojo, you are getting out of hand. What do you think our parents pay taxes and school fees for? For us to enjoy—or to buy a new car every year for Simpson?" The other boys laughed. Simpson was the European headmaster, feared by the small boys, adored by the boys in the middle school, and liked, in a critical fashion, with reservations, by some of the senior boys and African masters. He had a passion for new motor-cars, buying one yearly.

"Come to think of it," Sorie continued to Kojo, "you must take something yourself, then we'll know we are safe." "Yes, you must," the other boys insisted. Kojo gave in and, unwillingly, took a little nitrate for some gunpowder experiments which he was carrying out at home.

"Someone!" the look-out called.

The boys dispersed in a moment. Sorie swilled out his mouth at the sink with some water. Mr. Abu the lab. attendant entered and observed the innocent collective expression of the class. He glared round suspiciously and sniffed the air. It was a physics experiment, but the place smelled chemical. However, Vernier came in then. After asking if anyone was in difficulties, and finding that no one could momentarily think up anything, he retired to his chair and settled down to an article on Christian Reunion, adjusting his spectacles and thoughtfully sucking an empty tooth-socket.

Towards the end of the period, the class collected around Vernier and gave in their results, which were then discussed. One of the more political boys asked Vernier if dark surfaces gave out more heat, was that why they all had black faces in West Africa. A

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few boys giggled. Basu looked down and tapped his club foot embarrassedly on the floor. Vernier was used to questions of this sort from the senior boys. He never committed himself as he was getting near retirement and his pension, and became more guarded each year. He sometimes even feared that Simpson had spies among the boys.

"That may be so, although the opposite might be more convenient."

Everything in science had a loophole, the boys thought, and said so to Vernier.

"Ah! that is what is called research," he replied, enigmatically.

Sorie asked a question. Last time, they had been shown that an electric spark with hydrogen and oxygen atoms formed water. Why was not this method used to provide water in town at the height of the dry season when there was an acute water shortage?

"It would be too expensive," Vernier replied, shortly. He disliked Sorie, not because of his different religion, but because he thought that Sorie was a bad influence and also asked ridiculous questions.

Sorie persisted. There was plenty of water during the rainy season. It could be split by lightning to hydrogen and oxygen in October and the gases compressed and stored; then changed back to water in March during the shortage. There was a faint ripple of applause from Sorie's admirers.

"It is an impracticable idea," Vernier snapped.

The class dispersed and started walking back across the hot grass. Kojo and Bandele heaved sighs of relief and joined Sorie's crowd, which was always the largest.

"Science is a bit of a swindle," Sorie was saying. "I do not for a moment think that Vernier believes any of it himself," he continued. "Because if he does, why is he always reading religious books?"

"COME back, all of you, come back!" Mr. Abu's stentorian voice rang out, across to them.

They wavered and stopped. Kojo kept walking on in a blind panic. "Stop," Bandele hissed across. "You fool." He stopped, turned and joined the returning crowd, closely followed by Bandele. Abu joined Vernier on the platform. The loose semicircle of boys faced them.

"Mr. Abu has just found this in the wastebin," Vernier announced, grey with anger. He held up the two broken halves of the thermometer. "It must be due to someone from this class as the number of thermometers was checked before being put out."

A little wind gusted in through the window and blew the silence heavily this way and that.

"Who?"

No one answered. Vernier looked round and waited.

"Since no one has owned up, I am afraid I shall have to detain you for an hour after school as punishment," said Vernier.

There was a murmer of dismay and anger. An important soccer house-match was scheduled for that afternoon. Some boys put their hands up and said that they had to play in the match.

"I don't care," Vernier shouted. He felt, in any case, that too much time was devoted to games and not enough to work.

He left Mr. Abu in charge and went off to fetch his things from the main building.

"We shall play 'Bible and Key,'" Abu announced as soon as Vernier had left. Kojo had been afraid of this and new beads of perspiration sprung from his troubled brow. All the boys knew the details. It was a method of finding out a culprit by divination. A large door-key was placed between the leaves of a Bible at the New Testament passage where Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead before the Apostles for lying, and the Bible suspended by two bits of string tied to both end of the key. The combination was held up by someone and the names of all present were called out in turn. When that of the sinner was called, the Bible was expected to turn round and round violently and fall.

Now Abu asked for a Bible. Someone produced a copy. He opened the first page and then shook his head and handed it back. "This won't do," he said, "it's a Revised

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Version; only the genuine Word of God will give us the answer."

An Authorised King James Version was then produced and he was satisfied. Soon he had the contraption fixed up. He looked round the semicircle from Sorie at one end, through the others, to Bandele, Basu, and Kojo at the other, near the door.

"You seem to have an honest face," he said to Kojo, "Come and hold it." Kojo took the ends of the string gingerly with both hands, trembling slightly.

Abu moved over to the low window and stood at attention, his sharp profile outlined against the red hibiscus flowers, the green trees, and the molten sky. The boys watched anxiously. A black-bodied lizard scurried up a wall and started nodding its pink head with grave impartiality.

Abu fixed his ageing bloodshot eyes on the suspended Bible. He spoke hoarsely and slowly:

"Oh Bible, Bible, on a key,
Kindly tell it unto me,
By swinging slowly round and true,
To whom this sinful act is due. . . ."

He turned to the boys and barked out their names in a parade-ground voice beginning with Sorie and working his way round, looking at the Bible after each name.

To Kojo, trembling and shivering as if ice-cold water had been thrown over him, it seemed as if he had lost all power and that some gigantic being stood behind him holding up his tired aching elbows. It seemed to him as if the key and Bible had taken on a life of their own and he watched, with fascination, the whole combination moving slowly, jerkily, and rhythmically in short arcs as if it had acquired a heart-beat.

"Ayo Sogbenri, Sonnir Kargbo, Oji Ndebu"; Abu was coming to the end now. "Tommy Longe, Ajayi Cole, Bandele Fagb . . ."

Kojo dropped the Bible. "I am tired," he said, in a small scream. "I am tired."

"Yes, he is," Abu agreed, "but we are almost finished; only Bandele and Basu are left."

"Pick up that book, Kojo, and hold it up again." Bandele's voice whipped through the air with cold fury. It sobered Kojo and he picked it up.

"Will you continue please with my name, Mr. Abu?" Bandele asked, turning to the window.

"Go back to your place quickly, Kojo," Abu said, "Vernier is coming. He might be vexed. He is a strongly religious man and so does not believe in the Bible and key ceremony."

Kojo slipped back with sick relief, just before Vernier entered.

In the distance the rest of the school were assembling for closing prayers. The class sat and stood around the blackboard and demonstration-bench in attitudes of exasperation, resignation, and self-righteous indignation. Kojo's heart was beating so loudly that he was surprised no one else heard it.

"Once to every man and nation
Comes the moment to decide. . . ."

The closing hymn floated across to them, interrupting the still afternoon.

Kojo got up. He felt now that he must speak the truth or life would be intolerable ever afterwards. Bandele got up swiftly before him. In fact, several things seemed to happen all at the same time. The rest of the class stirred. Vernier looked up from a book review which he had started reading. A butterfly, with black and gold wings, flew in and sat on the edge of the blackboard, flapping its wings quietly and waiting too.

"Basu was here first before any of the class," Bandele said firmly.

Everyone turned to Basu, who cleared his throat.

"I was just going to say so myself, Sir," Basu replied to Vernier's enquiring glance.

"Pity you had not thought of it before," Vernier said, drily. "What were you doing here?"

"I missed the previous class, so I came straight to the lab and waited. I was over there by the window trying to look at the

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blue sky. I did not break the thermometer, Sir."

A few boys tittered. Some looked away. The others muttered. Basu's breath always smelt of onions, but although he could play no games, some boys liked him and were kind to him in a tolerant way.

"Well, if you did not, someone did. We shall continue with the detention."

Vernier noticed Abu standing by. "You need not stay, Mr. Abu," he said to him. "I shall close up. In fact, come with me now and I shall let you out through the back gate."

He went out with Abu.

When he had left, Sorie turned to Basu and asked mildly:

"You are sure you did not break it?"

"No, I didn't."

"He did it," someone shouted.

"But what about the Bible and key?" Basu protested. "It did not finish. Look at him." He pointed to Bandele.

"I was quite willing for it to go on," said Bandele. "You were the only one left."

Someone threw a book at Basu and said, "Confess!"

Basu backed on to a wall. "To God, I shall call the police if anyone strikes me," he cried fiercely.

"He thinks he can buy the police," a voice called.

"That proves it," someone shouted from the back.

"Yes, he must have done it," the others said, and they started throwing books at Basu. Sorie waved his arm for them to stop, but they did not. Books, corks, boxes of matches rained on Basu. He bent his head and shielded his face with his bent arm.

"I did not do it, I swear I did not do it. Stop it, you fellows," he moaned over and over again. A small cut had appeared on his temple and he was bleeding. Kojo sat quietly for a while. Then a curious hum started to pass through him, and his hands began to tremble, his armpits to feel curiously wetter. He turned round and picked up a book and flung it with desperate force at Basu, and then another. He felt somehow that there was an awful swelling of guilt which he could only shed by punishing himself through hurting someone. Anger and rage against everything different seized him, because if everything and everyone had been the same, somehow he felt nothing would have been wrong and they would all have been happy. He was carried away now by a torrent which swirled and pounded. He felt that somehow Basu was in the wrong, must be in the wrong, and if he hurt him hard enough he would convince the others and therefore himself that he had not broken the thermometer and that he had never done anything wrong. He groped for something bulky enough to throw, and picked up the Bible.

"Stop it," Vernier shouted through the open doorway. "Stop it, you hooligans, you beasts."

They all became quiet and shamefacedly put down what they were going to throw. Basu was crying quietly and hopelessly, his thin body shaking.

"Go home, all of you, go home. I am ashamed of you." His black face shone with anger. "You are an utter disgrace to your nation and to your race."

They crept away, quietly, uneasily, avoiding each other's eyes, like people caught in secret passion.

Vernier went to the first-aid cupboard and started dressing Basu's wounds.

Kojo and Bandele came back and hid behind the door, listening. Bandele insisted that they should.

Vernier put Basu's bandaged head against his waistcoat and dried the boy's tears with his handkerchief, gently patting his shaking shoulders.

"It wouldn't have been so bad if I had done it, Sir," he mumbled, snuggling his head against Vernier, "but I did not do it. I swear to God I did not."

"Hush, hush," said Vernier comfortingly.

"Now they will hate me even more," he moaned.

"Hush, hush."

"I don't mind the wounds so much, they will heal."

"Hush, hush."

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"They've missed the football match and now they will never talk to me again, oh-ee, oh-ee, why have I been so punished?"

"As you grow older," Vernier advised, "you must learn that men are punished not always for what they do, but often for what people think they will do, or for what they are. Remember that and you will find it easier to forgive them. 'To thine own self be true!' " Vernier ended with a flourish, holding up his clenched fist in a mock dramatic gesture, quoting from the Shakespeare examination set-book for the year and declaiming to the dripping taps and empty benches and still afternoon, to make Basu laugh.

Basu dried his eyes and smiled wanly and replied: " 'And it shall follow as the night the day.' Hamlet, Act One, Scene Three, Polonius to Laertes."

"There's a good chap. First class, Grade One. I shall give you a lift home."

KOJO and Bandele walked down the red laterite road together, Kojo dispiritedly kicking stones into the gutter.

"The fuss they make over a silly old thermometer," Bandele begun.

"I don't know, old man, I don't know," Kojo said impatiently.

They had both been shakened by the scene in the empty lab. A thin invisible wall of hostility and mistrust was slowly rising between them.

"Basu did not do it, of course," Bandele said.

Kojo stopped dead in his tracks. "Of course he did not do it," he shouted, "we did it."

"No need to shout, old man. After all, it was your idea."

"It wasn't," Kojo said furiously. "You suggested we tried it."

"Well, you started the argument. Don't be childish." They tramped on silently, raising small clouds of dust with their bare feet.

"I should not take it too much to heart," Bandele continued. "That chap Basu's father hoards foodstuff like rice and palm-oil until there is a shortage and then sells them at high prices. The police are watching him."

"What has that got to do with it?" Kojo asked.

"Don't you see, Basu might quite easily have broken that thermometer. I bet he has done things before that we have all been punished for." Bandele was emphatic.

They walked on steadily down the main road of the town, past the Syrian and Lebanese shops crammed with knick-knacks and rolls of cloth, past a large Indian shop with dull red carpets and brass trays displayed in its windows, carefully stepping aside in the narrow road as the British officials sped by in cars to their hill-station bungalows for lunch and siesta.

Kojo reached home at last. He washed his feet and ate his main meal for the day. He sat about heavily and restlessly for some hours. Night soon fell with its usual swiftness, at six, and he finished his homework early and went to bed.

Lying in bed he rehearsed again what he was determined to do the next day. He would go up to Vernier:

"Sir," he would begin, "I wish to speak with you privately."

"Can it wait?" Vernier would ask.

"No, Sir," he would say firmly, "as a matter of fact it is rather urgent."

Vernier would take him to an empty classroom and say, "What is troubling you, Kojo Ananse?"

"I wish to make a confession, Sir. I broke the thermometer yesterday." He had decided he would not name Bandele; it was up to the latter to decide whether he would lead a pure life.

Vernier would adjust his slipping glasses up his nose and think. Then he would say:

"This is a serious matter, Kojo. You realise you should have confessed yesterday."

"Yes, Sir, I am very sorry."

"You have done great harm, but better late than never. You will, of course, apologise in front of the class and particularly to Basu who has shown himself a finer chap than all of you."

"I shall do so, Sir."

"Why have you come to me now to apolo-

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gise? Were you hoping that I would simply forgive you?"

"I was hoping you would, Sir. I was hoping you would show your forgiveness by beating me."

Vernier would pull his glasses up his nose again. He would move his tongue inside his mouth reflectively. "I think you are right. Do you feel you deserve six strokes or nine?"

"Nine, Sir."

"Bend over!"

Kojo had decided he would not cry because he was almost a man.

Whack! Whack!!

Lying in bed in the dark thinking about it all as it would happen tomorrow, he clenched his teeth and tensed his buttocks in imaginary pain.

Whack! Whack!! Whack!!!

Suddenly, in his little room under his thin cotton sheet, he began to cry. Because he felt the sharp lancing pain already cutting into him. Because of Basu and Simpson and the thermometer. For all the things he wanted to do and be which would never happen. For all the good men they had told them about, Jesus Christ, Mohamed, and George Washington who never told a lie. For Florence Nightingale and David Livingstone. For Kagawa, the Japanese man, for Gandhi, and for Kwegyir Aggrey, the African. Oh-ee, oh-ee. Because he knew he would never be as straight and strong and true as the school song said they should be. He saw, for the first time, what this thing would be like, becoming a man. He touched the edge of an inconsolable eternal grief. Oh-ee, oh-ee; always, he felt, always I shall be a disgrace to the nation and the race.

His mother passed by his bedroom door slowly dragging her slippered feet as she always did. He pushed his face into his wet pillow to stifle his sobs, but she had heard him. She came in and switched on the light.

"What *is* the matter with you, my son?"

He pushed his face further into his pillow.

"Nothing," he said, muffled and choking.

"You have been looking like a sick fowl all afternoon," she continued.

She advanced and put the back of her moist cool fingers against the side of his neck.

"You have got fever," she exclaimed. "I'll get something from the kitchen."

When she had gone out, Kojo dried his tears and turned the dry side of the pillow up. His mother reappeared with a thermometer in one hand and some quinine mixture in the other.

"Oh, take it away, take it away," he shouted, pointing to her right hand and shutting his eyes tightly.

"All right, all right," she said, slipping the thermometer into her bosom.

He is a queer boy, she thought, with pride and a little fear as she watched him drink the clear bitter fluid.

She then stood by him and held his head against her broad thigh as he sat up on the low bed, and she stroked his face. She knew he had been crying but did not ask him why, because she was sure he would not tell her. She knew he was learning, first slowly, and now quickly, and she would soon cease to be his mother and be only one of the womenfolk in the family. Such a short time, she thought, when they are really yours and tell you everything. She sighed and slowly eased his sleeping head down gently.

THE next day Kojo got to school early, and set to things briskly. He told Bandele that he was going to confess but would not name him. He half hoped he would join him. But Bandele had said, threateningly, that he had better not mention his name, let him go and be a Boy Scout on his own. The sneer strengthened him and he went off to the lab. He met Mr. Abu and asked for Vernier. Abu said Vernier was busy and what was the matter, anyhow.

"I broke the thermometer yesterday," Kojo said in a businesslike manner.

Abu put down the glassware he was carrying.

"Well, I never!" he said. "What do you think you will gain by this?"

"I broke it," Kojo repeated.

"Basu broke it," Abu said impatiently. "Sorie got him to confess and Basu himself

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came here this morning and told the science master and myself that he knew now that he had knocked the thermometer over by mistake when he came in early yesterday afternoon. He had not turned round to look, but he had definitely heard a tinkle as he walked by. Someone must have picked it up and put it in the waste-bin. The whole matter is settled, the palaver finished."

He tapped a barometer on the wall and, squinting, read the pressure. He turned again to Kojo.

"I should normally have expected him to say so yesterday and save you boys missing the game. But there you are," he added, shrugging and trying to look reasonable, "you cannot hope for too much from a Syrian boy."

Peter Everett

Ruysbroek and the Hunters

Clad in amber leather he is no Ruysbroek,
This seaman with his palms outspread to order
The rowers; nor are they visionaries who bob
On this nostalgic sea, singing under hoods
And dark fur-caps as they pursue the seal.

An island's white paradise abuts the sun;
And here are God's men rowing in their shells,
Unreal as kings on cards; bolt upright they go,
Between two worlds, where seals on floes
Loll, fool-faced, yet contain their oil

And keep their fur to body; stately, snout at
Heaven; islanded on blue shards, honk out
Creation's continuity or bask—sun flashed in
Their bright bodies and pronged jaws. But now,
One leopard, chosen out, ringed by human cries

Plunges in terror and fury from their strident
Exile, who sing of Ghent's far beauty; of a land
Where Ruysbroek fell to pursue the fiery air,
Thriving beyond all body's sour disorder
In love. And here, seal's love-sad eyes on man

Sighting his donderbus do not abase him to
Consider God seeing God. No. Seal blood spreads
In swirling water, spreads under idle sculls:
The monster flails; his death throes quiver
Their oars, that turn and stir gently in his

Torment's waves, until the oars are still. Then
Something of the Lord has passed; its body, lashed
To the boat side, drawn easily as Ruysbroek's
To heaven, sleekly slides to divide the rowers'
Shadows as they row, under that alien sun.

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Richard Roud

The Theatre on Trial

Three Drama Critics and their Verdicts and what they said

SEVERAL months ago Stephen Spender asked me to write an article for ENCOUNTER on the present state of the theatre in England. He suggested, and I agreed, that no article would be complete without some consideration of theatre criticism as well. I wrote the article and mailed it to ENCOUNTER. A few weeks later I was summoned by Mr. Spender and Mr. Kristol for a little talk. This sounded ominous. It was. Both of them told me that I had gone too far. I had not been constructive; I had not been fair to the critics. The editors suggested that I interview two or three drama critics, present them with my findings, and see whether their views tallied with mine. They also suggested one or two other problems that might profitably be discussed.

So, armed with a sheaf of set questions, I proceeded to interview Mr. T. C. Worsley of the *New Statesman*, Mr. Kenneth Tynan of the *Observer*, and Mr. Philip Hope-Wallace of the *Manchester Guardian*.*

The first question I asked each of the critics did not concern anything I had discussed in my original article; it was one that had been suggested by Messrs. Spender and Kristol: What is the function of the drama critic? It had seemed to me at the time to be a rather naïve question. As it turned out, I was wrong.

Mr. T. C. Worsley's answer was that the critic had many indissoluble functions. *He is a tipster, a publicity agent, an essayist, a public performer, a reporter. It is also his job to create interest in worthwhile plays and to start discussion rolling.*

Mr. Tynan did not agree with this formulation. He began by telling me what the function of the drama critic was *not*: *It is not to teach actors, directors, or playwrights what to do. It is not to be constructive. As Ralph Ingersoll* (sometime editor of *PM*, the New York newspaper) *once said: If a man gives me a counterfeit ten-dollar bill, I'm not obliged to give him back a good one. What the critic should do,* continued Mr. Tynan, *is to write for the man who will read his criticism in ten to fifteen years' time. He is recording for posterity how a certain play struck one temperament on one particular night: the effect of a given play on one particular mind, with all its biases and emotional slants. If he can set this down accurately and vividly, then he has done his job.*

I mentioned to him Lindsay Anderson's complaint (in a recent number of *Encore*) that Mr. Tynan was at fault in giving a "selling" notice to *The Chalk Garden* and a "non-selling" one to *The Good Woman of Setzuan*. Mr. Anderson granted that the production of *The Good Woman* might not have been up to the mark, but he said that nevertheless Mr. Tynan should have "kept his eye on the ball." Mr. Tynan most emphatically rejected the notion that the critic should act as salesman. *This idea pushes the critic in the wrong direction. The fact that, for example, my review of* Look Back in Anger *contributed slightly to its success was purely fortuitous and inadvertent on my part. The first intention and the only responsibility of the critic is personal; anything else is a by-product.*

My third critic, Mr. Hope-Wallace, rather disagreed with Mr. Tynan, as indeed Mr. Tynan had assured me he would. *I think that the critic should be the* best *member of the audience. I am against the semi-informed critic* (e.g., *the failed actor*) *because he knows too much: too much because the critic should be concerned with the end-product, not the means, nor the*

* We also decided to submit the interviews to the critics before publication in order to let them either make revisions or add footnotes. Mr. Worsley and Mr. Tynan revised; Mr. Hope-Wallace added footnotes.

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*intentions. The worst criticism in the world is that of one actress by another. The critic should be on the side of the audience. Should he be a tipster? Well, that's inevitable, if deplorable.**

Mr. Hope-Wallace did agree with Tynan, though, that the critic should not be constructive —or at least this should not necessarily be part of his policy. Nor did he think that the critic had a responsibility to plug a play like *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, if it were badly represented. *On the other hand*, he said, *I am terribly shy of jumping on the Brecht bandwagon. I am the only† critic in London, who understands German, and believe me, the "Emperor's New Clothes" aspect of the* Berliner Ensemble *is staggering.*

ONE of the points I had made in my article was that drama critics did not have enough space in which to express themselves. As a matter of fact, both Worsley and Hope-Wallace said that they felt themselves very lucky because their respective papers gave them as much space as they needed. Tynan, on the other hand, said that he did suffer a little from the lack of space. He was generally limited to 1,000–1,200 words; he would prefer 1,600. Indeed, he feared that the space limitation occasionally forced him into making statements which were too blunt because he did not have enough room to qualify or explain them.

I then asked Mr. Tynan how much he thought the critic should let himself be influenced by his own beliefs (political, religious, etc.). *The trouble is that there has been too much emphasis in the past fifty years on style*, he said. *I am much more interested in* what *is being said than in* how *it is being said. I want to see how it impinges on my ideas about society and life in general. If I see a play imbued with wog-flogging, flag-wagging, anti-Semitism, or racialism of any kind, I am predisposed to detest it no matter how well it is written. For example,* South Sea Bubble *was bursting with implied Toryism: when a play depends on an idea you have rejected, you cannot stomach the play.*

I agreed that this might very well be so; however, I suggested that his attitude could be carried too far. For example, I said, in your review of the New York production of *The Potting Shed*, you said that you disliked the play because there was no spokesman in it for old-fashioned humanism. Do you seriously believe that an author must express every point of view? Is it not enough that he expresses his own well? *No, I can't love a play if my side—by which I mean humanism in its widest possible sense—is completely ignored.* But can't you read Dante, for example, even though your side is not represented? *Yes, I can think myself back in Dante, who, after all, wrote in an age of faith. But* The Potting Shed *is a representation of contemporary life, and I cannot accept resurrection as a physical possibility. Now in a play like Bernanos'* Dialogue des Carmélites *the assumptions hold good; it, too, is about an age of faith.*

Mr. Hope-Wallace did not agree. He thought that the critic ought to be as objective as possible. *I think Graham Greene's ideas are* hell, *but* The Living Room (*I haven't seen* The Potting Shed) *is a good play even if one doesn't agree with its ideas. Does the play capture the audience? That is the only criterion. I'm against the Sunday-school attitude towards the theatre,* he continued, *because it leads eventually to Tolstoy's point of view: that Harriet Beecher Stowe is a greater artist than Shakespeare.*

Yes, I see what you mean, I said. But do you really think that the theatre has any effect on those who go to it? *Oh yes, it has an enormous influence. Consider the effect Shaw had on England: because of his constant deflating of the English character we are now much more able to laugh at ourselves.* I objected that perhaps Shaw was not the cause of this, but only the expression of a general tendency. After all, before him, there had been Wilde. *No,* he answered, *Shaw was the agent, not the expression. That's why all his plays since* St. Joan *seem out of date.*

At this point I decided to confront him with Richard Findlater's *Credo*:

> "I believe firmly in the primacy of the drama among the democratic arts.... The first function of a play is to entertain the audience... plays are made for 'perfectly common-place' people. To accept the permanent division of high- and low-brow, the unbridgeable chasm between the popular and the true is a counsel of despair."

*Yes, I agree with him. The theatre must be full, people must be with you for you to fully enjoy a theatrical experience. The play must move the whole audience, not just you.** I didn't see that this really supported Findlater's beliefs, but we let it pass.

MR. TYNAN'S reaction to Findlater's statement was: *No, I only wish it were. The theatre has always been a minority art. In*

* This telescopes numerous replies.—P. H.-W.

† "One of the few English drama critics working on a daily who...".—P. H.-W.

* I just can't have listened to what Mr. Roud asked. I was toying with the idea of a four-part harmonic setting for Findlater's *Credo*! All I meant was the obvious truth that the theatre is a public not a private affair.—P. H.-W.

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this country the theatre has been supported by the "play-going snobs"—the exclusive party—800 people behind closed doors at a unique, unrepeatable experience. All the charm of exclusiveness. And the theatre has to be sold to the one per cent. of the population that goes to it precisely on *this charm.* Well then, I said, if only one per cent. go, and if they are largely in search of an exclusive and snobbish experience, why do you worry about the deleterious effect that, for example, Samuel Beckett's despair (if despair it is) is going to have on the audience? I explained to him that this was one of the points I had made in my original article: that it was time we accepted the fact that the theatre was a minority art with no social efficacy, and that therefore we could stop troubling ourselves about the good or harm it could do.

Ah, but it should *influence them. The critic should make the connections if the audience doesn't. The trouble is that people hang up their convictions with their hats and coats. They expect life inside the theatre to be an alternative to, not an interpretation of what is going on outside. In other countries, this is not so. The reason why Genêt's* Le Balcon *was postponed for so long in France is that the authorities were afraid people would take it seriously. Here there was no trouble because the authorities knew that they wouldn't. In Poland,* Waiting for Godot *was cheered for many weeks because people took Godot to be the spirit of socialism, ever announced, never arriving.* Julius Caesar *was also a great success in Poland because people identified Caesar with Stalin.* I objected that these reactions seemed to me to be rather naïve. *Maybe, but I prefer that to the state obtaining in this country. Here the audience never bothers about whether the play they are watching has any relevance to their lives. They will even "identify" with situations that bear no resemblance to anything, and which they know to be utterly false. For example, in the last act of* The Deep Blue Sea *we have a woman who is ready to kill herself saved by the apparition of a kind of* Passing of the Third Floor Back *figure who suggests that she take up her painting again. The audience* knows *that this is no solution to her dilemma, yet they are bathed in tears at her redemption. This I find a masterstroke of unreality. It makes me feel like those American critics who complain that Wilde's comedies have no connection with life as they know it.*

Would you then condemn Wilde's plays for that reason? I asked. *No, here in England they are relevant because nobody ever "sent up" establishment morality quite so brilliantly.* Well, what about a play like *Romeo and Juliet*? Does that relate directly to our problems to-day? *Ah, now that* does *connect. It connects now because it connected then. Besides, the vitality of the theme is proved by the number of modern versions of it:* Romanoff and Juliet, *the new musical,* West Side Story. *But what keeps* Romeo *in the repertoire is not just thematic vitality: it's the fact that it's thoroughly and totally Elizabethan. It's drenched in its own period—and that's just as true of* Lear *or* Julius Caesar. *The more a play's of an age, the more it's for all time—always assuming, of course, that there's a genius writing it. The trouble is that audiences won't think themselves back.* You think then, I said, that they are all like Huckleberry Finn who complained that Miss Watson had got him "all in a sweat" over the plight of Moses and the "bullrushers" without telling him that Moses had been dead for a considerable number of years. Huck thereupon lost interest because he took "no stock in dead people." *Exactly,* said Mr. Tynan. *There are too many like him who take no stock in dead playwrights.*

T. C. Worsley's views on the theatre's effect on society were somewhat more moderate than those of Mr. Tynan. *The theatre* can *be effective propaganda (as it is in Russia), but really it comes down to the problem of the free society versus the organised one. One wants the vitality of discussing contemporary life in the theatre because art must have some relation to the life we are all leading. But then again, I wonder. Suppose we found a play as perfect in its way as Pater's* Imaginary Portraits, *and, like them, as completely unconcerned with contemporary life and its problems; would we regard it as a good play? Yes, I suppose we would have to say it was. The answer is, finally, that one wants both kinds of play in the contemporary theatre.*

I am afraid that although the three critics do not altogether agree with me, I am still convinced of the validity of my original observations. The theatre may have *been* the great "democratic" art at certain periods of world history: fifth-century Greece, the Roman Empire (if we can count the gladiatorial combats and the naval battles as theatre, not to mention the undoubtedly cathartic sight of lions eating Christians), the Elizabethan age. But in spite of the tales we hear about Beaumarchais starting the French revolution, I doubt very much whether the theatre has had much importance as a social factor since the Counter-Reformation. Indeed, many great playwrights were during their lifetime without a large public: Corneille and Racine, Kleist and Büchner, Ibsen and Strindberg.

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On the other hand, it is to be admitted that the theatre has occupied, until the early twentieth century the favoured position of an art that was, to use Panofsky's phrase, "necessary." Necessary in the sense that people felt they could not do without it. How much influence it had on their lives and ways of thinking is another matter. Is it not true that art can only crystallise already-existing elements of opinion? Art cannot persuade you to change your mind. The *Mariage de Figaro* could not convince anyone of the decadence of the ruling classes unless he were partly or wholly convinced of it already.

But now the theatre cannot even claim to be a necessity. With the advent of the cinema and television, the theatre has ceased to play an important part in providing our "basic" entertainment. Nevertheless, plays continue to be criticised as if the theatre were an art of great social purport. Plays are not criticised as works of art, but rather as moral tracts, lessons for behaviour, or forums for expressing "ideas" about contemporary civilisation. Considering that the theatre reaches (as all three critics have agreed) only one per cent. of the population, and has, as I maintain, very little effect on them, this appraisal of doctrinal worth seems unnecessary.

I PUT all this to Mr. Tynan, and asked him whether he didn't think he insisted too much on the importance of "ideas"? For example, I reminded him that in reviewing Ionesco's *Amédée* at Cambridge, he had said that although he very much liked the play, unfortunately Ionesco, as a thinker, was banal. Wouldn't you agree, I asked, that most of the great playwrights of the past were also banal, as thinkers? Chekhov, Racine, or Shakespeare hardly had an original *idea* in their plays. Isn't Brecht surely as banal a thinker as Ionesco? Is it not because you perhaps share Brecht's ideas that you find him less banal? *No*, he answered, *not at all. Brecht's ideas are not banal in the English theatre, and that is the important thing: these ideas are new here. As for Ionesco, I should perhaps have expressed myself more clearly. It is not that his thinking is banal; he is simply anti-thinking; he has deliberately removed all ideas from his plays.*

How, then, I asked, do you enjoy his plays, when the all-important ideas are absent from them? *Being as schizophrenic as everyone else*, he said, *I am partly drawn towards the ideals of Zen Buddhism* (i.e., *non-thought*) *and partly towards its antithesis:* i.e., *progressive social thought. I am fully aware of this split in my attitude—in fact it rather amuses me. Nevertheless, it explains why I like Ionesco, and it explains why I like Brecht. I think that Brecht and Zen meet full circle, anyway; both have tangible, concrete views of life.*

But it seems to me, I said, that Beckett's *Fin de Partie* also expresses a concrete view of life, and yet it was a play you felt you had to reject. Why? *I had to reject* Fin de Partie, *remarkable as it was, because of its deterministic viewpoint —we are all trapped—which leads to fatalism and is basically anti-life.* But wouldn't you agree, I asked, that Beckett has the right to express his personal philosophy? In any case, he had not meant to present a despairing view: to him it simply seemed a realistic one. If one applied such criteria to the novel, I continued, *Moby Dick*, *Madame Bovary*, and many others would have to be rejected. *No, what I have said does not apply to the novel. A novel is addressed to one person at a time. There is no danger of 1,000 people being "infected" simultaneously. In a play, you can't stop to think and reject; in the presence of the dramatic illusion you are carried out of yourself. In fact, the magic is so strong that intervals are needed to break the spell.* (They are also needed, I irreverently said to myself, to permit the audience to go to the w.c. and the theatre to make money selling drinks at the bar.)

Perhaps, I suggested to Mr. Tynan, your last remark is already the answer to the next question I was going to put to you: would you agree that in this country there exists a separation between the intellectuals and the theatre that does not exist in France? That is, if every play has to be judged by the amount of harm it may do an audience, the resulting restriction might well force the intellectual to less circumscribed areas of literature. *Well, the separation most decidedly exists. The English intellectual, though, enjoys isolation, except in bed. He does not go to the theatre, nor does he like café life, nor does he, except in times of stress, band together in groups. When an intellectual* does *go to the theatre, it is either to see Edwige Feuillère or the Crazy Gang—but nothing in between. I am not sure how this state of affairs has come about. It certainly was not so in the eighteenth century. Perhaps it started with the Romantics, who all wrote plays but hardly ever went to the theatre. That's a fairly common English pattern.*

Well, I said, there were Tennyson, Browning, and Henry James, all of whom tried their hand at the stage. *Yes, but they were only isolated examples. There* was *a sort of revival with Granville-Barker and Shaw but it didn't last long. Anyhow, the situation might be saved if there were more theatres with a certain standard. I must say, though, that there were even fewer twenty years ago. Perhaps George Devine*

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and the Royal Court, if their success continues, will fill the gap.

MR. T. C. Worsley agreed that the separation did exist. He too thought that George Devine might be the answer. As Copeau was in France, I suggested: perhaps the intellectuals need to be reassured that the theatre is intellectually respectable before they will go to it. *Yes*, said Mr. Worsley, *but part of the fault lies with the intellectuals. They are too cut off from life. They would like, I suppose, an esoteric theatre. But the trouble is that when the theatre becomes too esoteric, it becomes as boring as poetry and the little magazines. Artists are here to articulate for the inarticulate. Painters are the least good at this now, and poets come next. Playwrights are in a slightly better positon, and the theatre could help to close the enormous gap now existing between art and the audience. The little theatres are all right; they worked well between the wars and their plays got into the commercial theatres afterwards, like Anouilh, for instance. But one must always remember that the theatre has one foot in popular culture and another in middle-brow culture.* This seemed to me to leave no foot for high-brow culture, but I let it pass.

Mr. Hope-Wallace also agreed that the separation did exist. *The theatre is terribly middle-class now. Was it Shaw who did this?* he mused. *Yes, I think so. He debunked theatrical values and turned the theatre into a kind of social pulpit. But the Shavian theatre was good, although he reduced it to a commentary on life. No, it really wasn't Shaw's fault, but that of those who came after him: his less intelligent followers like Galsworthy and J. B. Priestley. This is what explains the enormous success here of the Russian ballet—it preserved the essential sensuousness of the theatre. That's why opera and the ballet have been so popular since the war. Even crude early Verdi operas give you that feeling of exaltation that has largely been missing in the English theatre for the past thirty years.*

All three critics agree that the gulf between the theatre and the intellectuals exists. All agree that it is a bad thing. They disagree as to the causes of this phenomenon, and doubtless, there are many causes involved. One hesitates to suggest that the critics themselves might have something to do with this much-lamented separation. But after all, as Jean Paulhan once said, "If the critics abandon and betray literature, what can one expect from the public?" For example, the intellectual world both here and in France would by and large agree that Beckett and Ionesco are two of the most important avant-garde writers to-day. Yet when Beckett's latest play, *Fin de Partie*, was given at the Royal Court, how was it received by the critics? None of them complained that it was a bad play. They recognised, as well they might, its considerable merits. But most of them felt compelled to add that Beckett's theme was depressing and dangerous.

Mr. Philip Hope-Wallace said that *Fin de Partie* had great poetic bite, but that it was facile and uninteresting in the way that abstractions always are. Facile, because despair is always facile. I protested that hope could also be facile, as witness Mr. Tynan's example of *The Deep Blue Sea*: was not that more facile? *Perhaps*, he said, *but I can't help feeling that* Fin de Partie *was a private elaboration. One has to draw the line somewhere. In the novel, a Kafka can get away with it, but not in the theatre. The theatre is a strangely coarse medium; it must instantaneously capture 75 per cent. of the audience.* Now here it seems to me that Mr. Hope-Wallace is selling the theatre short. And if he, one of our most intelligent critics does this, what can we expect from the public?

Mr. T. C. Worsley wrote about *The Chairs*: "Despair is a killing emotion—and I hope to goodness that our young writers who are at present kicking out with so thoroughly healthy a reaction won't get infected with this Parisian malaise, this creeping paralysis of the will." I asked him to enlarge a bit on this. He said that perhaps he had gone too far in this review. All he meant to say was that he himself found the play so depressing that he hoped he would not have to sit through many others like it in the future. Isn't *King Lear* depressing, I asked? *Yes, but the horror in it is alleviated by the poetry.* I find that the horror is alleviated in *The Chairs* by the humour. *Perhaps so, but isn't despair all wrong? Don't we find personally that there is always light on the other side? Either we go mad, or else we come out of it.*

Mr. Tynan found Strindberg's *Dream Play* repugnant because of its conclusion that the mere fact of existence is the most agonising thing in life. Surely Strindberg's is an intellectually respectable position which has neither to be defended nor attacked: the important thing seems to me to be not the rightness of his belief, but rather how he has expressed it, how he has embodied it, whether or not he has made a successful play on this theme. Surely after nineteen hundred-odd years, we can accept the possibility of a man finding this life a vale of tears. One is all for committed criticism, but to object to Strindberg, as a Marxist might, that he does not go into the "real" causes of man's unhappiness, *e.g.*, the class struggle, seems irrelevant.

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ARE not the critics over-estimating the importance, not of content, but of ideology in the theatre?* For my part, I think so. I would be much more inclined to back the view expressed by Ionesco in a recent essay, which sums up indirectly my main contentions:

"Some people to-day reproach the theatre for not being of its time. To my mind, it's too much of its time. And that is why it is weak and ephemeral.... The theatre must find a way out of that intermediary zone which is neither art nor philosophical thought. For art is the domain of the passions and not of didactic instruction. ... What is the point of the theatre doubling philosophy, theology, or politics? Rather than see the dramatic illustration of this or that political theory, I prefer to read my daily newspaper or listen to the candidates of my particular political party."

* I certainly do not.—P. H.-W.

J. F. Hendry

The Fox

Trapped is the fox.
The cruel face
Among the rocks
Alert for the grace
Found in the lamb
Burns on the spit
Its lust for charm
Made of it.
The hounds of desire,
Unleashing their
Liquid fire
On the stung air;
Burn in his brain.
Long ago sin
Let them in.
Now in the rain
Blood turns to wax,
Until he flees,
And all he sees
Is all he lacks.
In that storm tossed,
All he hears
Is all he fears,
That he is lost,
And yet must still
Run on, to prove
Hell's Hunter moving
Into the kill.

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Norman Birnbaum

Nothing Land

An Academic Traveller's Notes in East Germany

ACADEMIC travel is cheap (somebody else usually pays for it), reasonably comfortable, and frequently misleading. The academic traveller tends to move in a closed circle. He meets his foreign colleagues, works in archives and libraries, exchanges pleasantries at breakfast with the *patronne* of his pension, and observes the rest of the scene benignly from afar. He can savour something of the atmosphere, of course, by sitting over a newspaper and a drink in the local; he generally gets no closer to the rhythms of ordinary life. A bookish sociologist with historical interests, I can only record my admiration for my colleagues in anthropology, their nights on dung floors and the stoical devotion with which they endure the bites of ghastly insects. My own travels seem so prosaic and limited; at least they did, until I visited Communist Germany. In a Marxist state, what could be more significant than conversations with social scientists? In a totalitarian society, even casual encounters with ordinary people can tell the visitor something of importance. Circumstance, then, converts the academic traveller into a political reporter.

The purpose of the visit was simple enough. In 1509 the populace of Erfurt, in Thuringia, rose against the oligarchy which ruled the town. The usual elements had combined to produce the disturbance: interference from neighbouring princes, economic exploitation, the general irritability of the late middle ages. Erfurt also had a university, where Luther had studied. He was still attached to the Augustinian Monastery in the town (although temporarily seconded to Wittenberg) when the rising occurred. In fact, he expressed his revulsion for the revolutionary party in terms that anticipated his violent reaction to the Peasants' War, thirteen years later. Much German scholarly ink has been spilled to show that Luther's politics derive from his theology. But in 1509, whatever else Luther may have been, he was not yet a Lutheran. If, therefore, his politics changed little between his Catholic period and his emergence as a Reformer, his theology may have been relatively unimportant. I wanted to examine the documents about the rising in the Erfurt City Archives and in the Provincial Central Archives in Weimar.

It was a straightforward scholarly project, and indeed one that should have appealed to the authorities in the German Democratic Republic. A good deal of Eastern German scholarship, some of it of a high order, has concentrated on this sort of question. The Peasants' War has been studied exhaustively, not least in an effort to give Germany what it so conspicuously lacks, a revolutionary tradition. Nonetheless, my first application for a visa was refused. I do not know why, although I suspect that my American citizenship caused difficulties. When I enquired in East Berlin, I was told that "nobody" knew me, although I had written on the letterhead of an institution not unknown abroad. I renewed the application, this time through scholarly intermediaries at the Humboldt University in East Berlin. Without much delay, they obtained the visa.

The activities of these intermediaries deserve mention. They include a young scholar who has spent some time doing research in London, and the Professor of Modern History at East Berlin, himself a visitor to England in January. They are genuinely interested in contact with their colleagues in the West; they see enough of their colleagues from the East. They were surprised to learn that Soviet students and scholars are now resident at British universities: their own government is not so permissive. They apparently obtained my visa, and their own travel permits, by hinting that the Eastern German government can hardly win the international recognition it seeks if it behaves more rigidly than the U.S.S.R. itself. The régime's willingness to make this concession creates a moral dilemma for the Western scholar. If he visits Eastern Germany, or if he extends hospitality

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to guests from it, he may be endorsing the régime. But he also may be assisting and encouraging those who, given the chance, would transform it. The evidence suggests that the risks are mainly on the régime's side: I travelled in good conscience.

I did so although I had been endorsed by my hosts as a *"fortschrittliche Wissenschaftler,"* a "progressive scholar." The term is not unambiguous, and I found wry assent from many in Eastern Germany when I suggested that it had many meanings. It is true that I tell my students that "if I'm anything, I suppose I am a Marxist." I invariably add, however, that "I'm not anything." It is also true that I find myself instinctively in the opposition, an unofficial point of contact with many in East Germany. In any case, I made it clear that my scholarship did not prove that progress had culminated in the Eastern German state. (I was careful not to talk about politics at all with my immediate hosts: I had the impression that they were true followers of the party line.)

THE German Democratic Republic is certainly not compelling evidence for theories of progressive direction in history. So accidental a state, called into existence under such discouraging circumstances, could never have grown; it had to be invented. The German Federal Republic is unstable enough. But at least the bankers and industrialists, the tenacious bureaucrats, ambitious politicians, and sycophantic professors who lead it have historical roots. Communist Germany, by contrast, is built like a house of cards—party cards. It has a new élite, composed in indeterminate proportions of despairing idealists, gangsters, and *Luftmenschen*.

The German Communist élite rules over a populace bitterly envious of Western Germany's prosperity and lacerated by self-pity at being on the wrong side of the military dividing line. They are nearly devoid of respect for their government—nearly, but not entirely so. The provisional and uncertain character of the East German state has impelled the Communists to rub into their subjects the impression that they are there, if not to stay, at least for a long time to come. Unfortunately, the facts of contemporary history are proving them right. The régime insists with ferocity on its power, but the people are less cowed than resigned. Their resentment and recrimination find targets in the West, helpless to relieve them. Slowly, and not quite imperceptibly, the populace is beginning to identify itself with the régime against which it once revolted.

This is a striking conclusion to reach, perhaps, after a trip in which I met practically nobody who gave the régime an unequivocal endorsement. But even those who held that life in Eastern Germany was a bed of nails were, apparently, prepared to lie in it. I was surprised to discover how prosaic the question of flight to the West had become. If somebody went, good luck to him. If one did not, there was no point in hoping for a radical change on the spot: it was good sense to dig in and make the best of it. Digging in, however, entails a personal *modus vivendi* with the régime. And many are engaged in finding precisely that. The recent improvement in economic conditions makes it easier for them to do so. Millions of enforced reconciliations do not, of course, add up to mass support for the "workers' and peasants' state." The reconciliations are devoid of politics. But they produce a compliant atmosphere, allaying the fears of resistance haunting the Communists, and giving them more room for manœuvre. The régime can now afford to make some (unimportant) concessions: the populace is ready to exaggerate their meaning.

It is a measure of the ineptitude of Ulbricht's dictatorship that it has been slow to exploit the situation. At times it does seem as if the Soviet Union had settled on Ulbricht as its chosen instrument for alienating Germany. But perhaps we had better not discount the familiar forces of human stupidity: Ulbricht and his personal followers actually seem to believe their own propaganda. Rather than work for limited goals with an unenthusiastic populace, they prefer to continue "class warfare" in a political vacuum. Not everybody on the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party shares these illusions: the latest convulsions show that some would like to rid themselves of Ulbricht. But he remains in power, and little change in party policy is to be expected.

DESPITE (and maybe because of) their resignation to the indefinite continuation of the régime, the Eastern Germans still want to visit Western Germany. (Even functionaries, I noticed, were not averse to an official excuse for a trip out.) The new decree on passports and travel, promulgated in December, evoked dismay and resentment. It envisaged Draconic penalties for *"Republicflucht"* and seemed to interdict even casual visits to the West. Christmas travel between the Germanies declined markedly as a result. With characteristic hypocrisy, the régime claimed that the new law had been forced upon it. Local officialdom invited the citizenry to meetings at which it appealed for "understanding." Perhaps the régime was reckoning on popular resentment of those who "deserted" to the West: there is as yet no sign of that. But a personal decision to

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remain in Eastern Germany has its own momentum. People who took some pains to denounce the government frequently told me that "our" currency had increased in value relative to the West Mark. Their political vocabularies echoed the Eastern radio stations. And they have begun to speak of the Western Germans, in general, in accents less brotherly than those espoused by the Ministry for All-German Affairs in Bonn. They do not believe that the régime will be changed and they are certainly not now prepared to take risks in order to change it.

Most Western visitors to Communist Germany see only East Berlin. The atmosphere there is deceptive. Eastern Germany as a whole, more exposed to Western influences than any other satellite, has the least relaxed of all Communist régimes. And Berlin, half of it Western, is surely the most tense of all Communist cities. The eastern half has a nightmare quality. Identity cards are demanded with every purchase (except books and newspapers), the luggage of outgoing passengers on the underground and elevated railway is often searched, the police are omnipresent. (Yet things are easier than they were five years ago.) The contrast with West Berlin is insistent and strident, the lightness and modernity of the new West Berlin renders the bleakness and stodginess of the eastern sector still more depressing. The Communists, of course, inherited the poorer part of the city. But it cannot be said that, granted the absence of outside assistance, they have done much for it: Stalinallee is a monument to bad taste. The casual visitor to East Berlin comes away melancholic, his sensibilities irritated by tension, shocked by the kinæsthetic effects of the quick transition between worlds.

Inside Eastern Germany proper, as compared with Berlin, things are more relaxed. I took the train to Leipzig. It made a slow circuit of the city, to avoid the Western sector—despite the fact that the East unequivocally controls all the railway installations. The control stop was just outside Berlin; I expected some questions, at the very least. The policeman who asked for identity papers just glanced at my visa and gave it back. (It was not in my passport but on a separate document: I preferred to give American officialdom no chance to see evil.) A Russian soldier came by, said "Good day" in Russian, and passed on. The control was over; the train puffed through the rain towards Wittenberg.

The other passengers in the compartment, a mixed lot, were glowering at me with that mixture of unashamed curiosity and hostility reserved by Germans for strangers in trains. My clothing was different and my case, a plaid American design, was equally so. But nobody wished to talk: they preferred to stare. The corridor was full of people, chatting. Everybody in the train seemed to be talking except my immediate fellow passengers. I got up and joined in.

My interlocutors were workers, their families in the compartments behind them. One, a welder, wore a shiny blue Sunday suit—and a tie. The other, a less skilful sorter on a production line, was tieless. Within the visibly levelled East German social structure, there were lots of differentiations of this sort. The welder took the lead in the conversation and, with skilful indirections, quickly found directions out. "A rare meeting!" he exclaimed, and began to question me closely about the possibility of depression in America. But his views were not a result of indoctrination: they were the product of a singular compound of independent thought and received information. He mentioned the difficulties of all the industrialised countries in their relations with the underdeveloped areas, and characterised the Western system as "Imperialismus." But he did not depict "Imperialismus" in satanic terms, and he suggested that the Soviet Union had similar difficulties. He questioned me closely about wages and working conditions in the United States and I told him something of the place of the trade unions in the economy. "Our trade unions represent the state, not us." I gathered that he did not condemn the lower level trade union officials in the plants for this: it was simply part of the order of things. His own wages, he said, were barely sufficient: it was a struggle to keep things going. But he pronounced the social services of the régime "generous." He did not think industry ought to revert to private ownership upon reunification. In fact, he saw no prospect of reunification, least of all on Western terms.

The sorter was older and quieter. He nodded assent through much of his younger colleague's account—his face lit up only when he could talk about his private pleasure: bee-keeping. I began to see how ordinary people made life a bit more tolerable for themselves, under conditions that seemed to offer little relief. Both the sorter and the welder conveyed the same impression. They were resigned, disinclined to worry too much about imponderables, and not at all hopeful of a change.

We said good-bye at Wittenberg. "I hope we don't have to meet again in another war," the welder declared. A historic town, I observed, perhaps another great figure would come along to help us out. He shrugged his shoulders: he believed neither in great figures nor in providential intervention.

At Leipzig, I had a few hours to wait. The

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station was vast, its bomb-destroyed roof just being rebuilt. The weather would have made the Piazza San Marco depressing that day; in the Leipzig *Hauptbahnhof* it was unimaginably dark. Policemen in pairs, and a Russian Military Police patrol were about. But they seemed less conspicuous than in East Berlin, and nobody was stopped. My friends had been right: there were few, if any, checks inside Eastern Germany itself. But I had other business, and hurried to a telephone kiosk. The multi-lingual instructions were a token of the Leipzig Fair, I supposed—it was surprising to be told how to press the button, in English.

I rang Professor Ernst Bloch, the most distinguished mind in the humanities in Eastern Germany. Bloch, under severe and open pressure, had been relieved of his teaching duties. The régime wanted a recantation of his philosophical heresies and a denunciation of those of his students who had fled to the West; Bloch has been loudly silent. Mrs. Bloch answered; I identified myself as a colleague from London who wished to pay his respects. She excused herself for a moment and then returned: "Please understand, but my husband thinks it would be better if you didn't come out." I understood very well, I replied, and asked her to convey the admiration of many foreign colleagues.

IN ERFURT, that night, I decided against the obvious hotel, the large one opposite the railroad station. By asking about, I found an old inn with an authentic 16th-century front. Nobody on the streets, including the policemen, seemed surprised to be asked in a foreign accent about lodging. I later learned that there were many visitors from the Eastern countries to this industrial centre. There were few from the West, and astonishment at the inn was general when I produced my passport. The police were telephoned: I was to register in the morning. In the meantime, I enjoyed the inn.

It was the centre of such bourgeois resistance to the régime as I could find on my trip: none. The regular customers were artisan masters, shopkeepers, clerks. Their economic situation was not bad, the beer was much unchanged, and they had seen it all: Kaiser, Weimar Republic, Hitler, American conquerors, and now this. Political medicine in such strenuous doses has to be administered skilfully if the patient is to find his political strength. But history is a clumsy physician, German history a charlatan. My friends at the inn took it for granted that the régime was deplorable. They agreed with the Western radio stations to which they listened. But they were not in the West and their disapproval of the régime had no practical importance. They assumed that I was on to things in the country, that no visitor could fail to see behind the façade. They drank their beer, visited their relatives in West Germany when they could—and made occasional tourist trips to Prague.

The police, the next morning, were reasonably friendly. In a headquarters crowded with all kinds of supplicants, I went to the office for foreigners. A painfully slow policeman filled out the requisite forms while his lieutenant telephoned somewhere to ask for something *"Gebührenfrei"* (free of charge) for his wife. With a half-embarrassed, half-cynical grin the slow policeman told me that I couldn't go to the Wartburg, fifty miles away, without special permission from Berlin. (A man I met at a restaurant offered to drive me there anyhow, but I thought it not fair to implicate him should we be found out.) The policeman acted as if I had been stupid to ask, either because I should have known the answer or because I should have gone in any case—I could not tell which.

I was made to feel at home in the city archives. The archivist, with whom I had corresponded, apparently won a brief engagement with officialdom to answer my letters in the first place. The regular visitors to the archives were two or three retired school teachers and museum keepers—the devoted amateurs who have made a profession of local historical research in Germany. They remarked that some recent writings on Erfurt in the late middle ages were influenced by "contemporary political conceptions." They were interested in understanding the past in its own terms: so much for history as the history of class struggles. *"Wie es eigentlich geschehen war?"* I asked. The phrase from Ranke delighted the old gentleman; it was as if I'd brought a breath of the certainties of their youth into that musty room. It would have been gratuitously cruel to tell them what I really thought of Ranke.

There was no difficulty in obtaining 16th-century documents: papers from 1871 onwards were classified. The archivist complained that foreign exchange regulations prevented his ordering historical literature—from Western Germany. But he bore with good humour the many impositions upon him by schoolboys and a whole company of miscellaneous seekers after knowledge, who seemed to feel that the archives were not reserved for scholarship but were the "people's own" in a literal sense.

IT WAS grey during my visit to Erfurt, an industrial town with a medieval core. But the sun shone on Weimar, which is intrinsically picturesque, a carefully preserved memento of the 18th century. The white snow in the parks

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and the rococo buildings made a charming impression. Even the Soviet garrison in the city failed to disturb it. On Sunday, a few officers, thick with epaulettes, were to be seen pushing prams: the townspeople remarked that the Wehrmacht garrison there before the war offered no similar diversion.

The Goethe and Schiller Houses, the museums, the Institute for Goethe-Schiller Research—all were carefully preserved. The Goethe House was displaying a remarkable Faust exhibition: contemporary records of the original Doctor Faustus, early versions of his legend, the manuscripts of Goethe's works on Faust. I was especially taken with an inscription at the beginning of the exhibition, on the late medieval background to the Faust legend. The curator had had the obliviousness (or the courage) to write something like this: "It was a period when men were beginning to criticise existing institutions openly, to insist on individual rights against social demands."

Weimar was a tourist centre. The Elephant, the famous hotel in town, was well prepared for foreign guests. A non-random sample of the world's press was available in the lounge: *Pravda*, *Rude Pravo*, *Trybuna Luda*, *Nepszabadsag*, and—a recent innovation, following Tito's recognition of the Eastern German state—*Borba*. For those interested in Western Europe, *L'Humanité* and the London *Daily Worker* were available. But there were few foreigners about in January: the audience at the famous German National Theatre was exclusively German. The régime spends a lot on the arts, and the productions in Weimar showed it. I attended a fine performance of Schiller's *The Robbers*, in its original, more revolutionary version. But the staging and décor, good as they were, were entirely traditional: the avant garde, in Eastern Germany, brings up the rear. I wondered what Schiller would have made of Weimar in 1958. It seems his own fate to serve as a symbol: the Schiller House displayed the French Revolutionary Assembly's award of honorary citizenship to the poet—which reached him years late, because they had his name hopelessly wrong.

In Weimar, I met a pastor of the Protestant Church—one whose duties brought him into contact with most parts of East German society. He was no theologian, but a man with an obvious sense of pastoral mission. His attitude to the régime was curiously ambiguous. He was convinced that a permanent struggle with it was his duty, equally convinced that its "socialism" was valuable, and there to stay. He had quite a good deal of contact with the Church in Western Germany: anything it published there could be circulated in the East by stamping it "for internal Church use only." He felt that the Churches in the two Germanies were slowly drawing apart. He did not make his own position explicit but I sensed it: it was more important to keep contact with society in the East, whatever the cost, than to retain formal connections with the West. I asked him about the response to Christianity in a population continually subject to party propaganda. He admitted that the Church drew its enormous prestige in Eastern Germany not from popular Christian convictions but because it incorporated "other" values.

The talk with the pastor was the last interesting thing I did in eastern Germany. I had to visit the police again for my exit permit. This time, they were young. One of them asked if difficulties could arise in America on account of a visit to a Communist country. I said that, conceivably, they could. "Curious, isn't it? Governments don't want their peoples to look around." My reference to their own travel regulations did not pass unnoticed: he smiled wryly, said nothing. On the train to Western Germany, I seemed to be the only passenger whose luggage was not searched: instructions obviously indicated politeness to foreigners, as distinct from West Germans. At Bebra, the West German border station, West German officialdom found my arrival very surprising. The Customs Inspector insisted on looking through my luggage.

"What are you after?"

"Imported goods!"

"Your colleagues over there are interested in export goods; why don't you organise a joint customs commission?"

"This isn't the place for political jokes."

THE connecting train was a modern diesel unit, its passengers seemingly indifferent to the border dividing their country, a mile or so away. I collected my impressions as we rode westward. I was going to visit a German colleague, a socialist, who had fled eastern Germany in 1949. What could one say about the East German dictatorship? There seemed to be little that I could tell him that he had not told me before my trip.

In the end, I had recourse to those contacts of which I was at first so sceptical: the intellectuals. By skirting my hosts, I managed to see quite a few of them. The younger ones, those under thirty-five, were perhaps the most interesting. Having had nothing but Nazi and Communist education, they were nonetheless strikingly cosmopolitan. (Some young Czechs I've met were quite like them, young Russians depressingly different.) They were Marxists but not dogmatists: they were quite able to dis-

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tinguish between a real situation and some scholastic interpretation of it. But, like their elders in intellectual life, they were politically stuck—between disdain for the West and revulsion against Stalinism.

The East German intelligentsia combines a thorough scepticism about any of the specific claims made by the Bolshevik ideologists with belief in Bolshevism's "essentially socialist" nature. They are prepared to change, but not to overthrow the régime. They are quite aware of the ferment in Poland and they can read Sartre's *Les Temps Modernes*. But the opportunity for open discussion of these ideas is denied them. They cannot, therefore, push each other outside the ideological cage presently confining them. Still less can they make contact with the rest of the German people—Ulbricht is, from his own point of view, quite right to insist on a Stalinlike repression of party controversy. But in the long run, repression now may guarantee that the eventual explosion will be more violent.

The intelligentsia, visibly and continually irritated, seemed a long way from exploding. But the frequency with which the intellectuals insisted that "in spite of it all" they were loyal, was exceedingly suspicious. They regard their reasons for remaining in Eastern Germany as very good. They were convinced that Western society was rotten—and this they declared, not because of ignorance but after repeated visits to Western Europe. Adenauer, they declared, is "your Ulbricht." In any case, they reminded me, political flight has many disadvantages: their East German academic credentials were valueless in the Federal Republic, and they had families to support. Most interesting of all was the assertion that they felt responsible for the régime: they could not, morally, abandon something partly their own creation.

But these singular protestations of despair, passivity, and battered principle did not always convince me—nor did they always convince them. They were sorely troubled men and women, one step or a half-step from resolutions of a desperate kind. The mute resignation of the populace disturbed them. But in Eastern Germany, articulate loyalty and inarticulate compliance mean the same thing—nothing.

Hayden Carruth

Concerning the Word "Prasine"

Your garden this August wears a tarnished green,
Dusty, shallow within a margin of maple leaves
That hang like parched tongues drawn on a monstrous screen
Behind you; thus, watching you, the eye receives

Palpable splendours of sun-browned arms and throat
Unambiguously, and your dress like a calyx, prasine
Against the unsheathing stem, splayed to denote
The deeper surging. Your gesture, gravely brazen

As a lily horn, offers me iced coffee with rum
In twining fibrillations of cream, while you say,
"In such heat even to raise a glass creates some
Uncertainty of will." You smile, and August's way

Unfolds on your flowering mouth; and now my life
Remembers me and what betrayals you ask of me, you,
Cut newly from summer as if with a jasper knife,
Whom not more than a moment ago I thought I knew.

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Yves Bonnefoy

Critics—English and French

And the distance between them

"Every nation, every race, has not only its own creative, but its own critical turn of mind; and is even more oblivious of the shortcomings and limitations of its critical habits than of those of its creative genius."

T. S. Eliot,
Tradition and the Individual Talent

IT IS a fact, if an unfortunate one, that the cultural gulf between modern nations is as wide as it has ever been. In France, where English is learnt and spoken far more often than any other language, I have been struck to see how little English poetry is understood—with the exception of Shakespeare whom (in the period between Voltaire and Copeau) we gradually managed to acclimatise. Donne, who has recently been the subject of so much attention in Anglo-Saxon countries, is still virtually unknown among us: the lack of any serious attempt to translate him is all the evidence one needs.* And the same could be said of Chaucer, Spenser, Shelley, even Milton. In a sense, modern poets (T. S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas) are better known. They get the benefit of contemporaneity, the equivocal illumination of gossip. But this only reveals another misapprehension. Because these poets are modern, the French reader readily believes that they are more accessible to him. As if this "modernity" were one and indivisible—whereas what is in fact one and indivisible is English poetry itself. And the same is true of French poetry; while the cleavage between them is as yet unbridged.

It might be supposed—and it has indeed been suggested—that literary criticism could appropriately act as a common denominator between national traditions and open up what has been withheld from us. But as soon as we try reading the *best* critics of our two nations, we see how far out we are in our calculations. I doubt whether a page, no matter how excellent, from William Empson on *Hamlet* or on Marvell's *The Garden*, or of Cleanth Brooks on John Donne, conveys very much to an unprepared French reader. And I can well believe that the English reader would emerge just as puzzled from reading Maurice Blanchot on Mallarmé or René Char. In fact, the cleavage is even greater between critical habits than between schools of poetry. In spite of everything, and whether they are French or Anglo-Saxon, poets have feelings and intuitions in common; and sometimes, with that primal sense of language which is natural to the poet, they are able to revitalise that common endowment which our two tongues derive from their Latin, Celtic, and Teutonic adventures. But critics have nothing to base themselves on except reason; and the unity of reason is a myth. Certainly the aims

* It was not until 1955 that some of Donne's work was published, in a collection intended for students. I should add that Jean Wahl has translated Traherne, Alfred Jarry *The Ancient Mariner*, and that Pierre Leyris has just published what must be described as a heroic adaptation of Gerard Manley Hopkins' most important poems.

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that critics pursue in Paris, London, or Chicago, are fundamentally different. What has resulted is the most profound reciprocal ignorance.

Not one of the "New Critics" has been translated into French. In France, Dryden and Johnson could hardly be more unknown than I. A. Richards; and it must be admitted that even the Coleridge of *Biographia Literaria*, which has been called the Bible of modern criticism, is never read or even quoted except by literary historians who are English specialists. But are periodicals in England and especially in America any better informed about French criticism? Admittedly, Georges Poulet's *Etudes sur le temps humain* have been published in English. But I have seldom seen the names of Bachelard or Blanchot referred to in the critical contributions to *The Times Literary Supplement*. In any case, the fact that a specialist might discuss Blanchot's ideas would not by itself imply that his thinking, which is difficult, could exercise a genuine influence. I have very little doubt that his work is as unrecognised on the other side of the Channel (or of the Atlantic) as that of Kenneth Burke or F. R. Leavis in our own country.

IS THERE anything to be done about this reciprocal ignorance? Only a large number of translations could prepare a truly common ground. Perhaps what would be most useful in the immediate future would be an exchange of critical anthologies, on the lines of those which are becoming increasingly common in the United States (I have in mind the work of Morton Zabel, for example). This kind of exchange would have at least one great advantage: it would encourage the formation of a glossary, and stimulate discussion of the essential terms which are clearly the main source of ignorance and misunderstanding. For nothing is more difficult than translating critical terminology, half-concrete and half-abstract as it is, and so very exact and yet never successful in excluding idiomatic connotations. What could be more difficult to put into French than the distinction between Imagination and Fancy, if one wanted to give the slightest idea of what it is in those two notions which an Englishman, who is used to Coleridge's thought, so readily grasps? And what sort of idea could one give of the Intentional Fallacy whose Aristotelian formalism is so foreign to our critical habits? How translate even the word "poem" which, with the New Critics, it seems to me, is coming to mean any complex composition either in prose or verse, without however ceasing to be specifically associated with the essential idea of "poetry." Indeed, a simple reflection on the difference between the two terminologies would lead to some singular discoveries.

But that is precisely what I have been leading up to. Instead of deploring the reciprocal indifference which French and Anglo-Saxon studies reveal, we might try to profit by one advantage which it offers us. It is just because these two criticisms are so utterly distinct, just because each of them could hardly show fewer signs of influence from the other, that their comparison has, so to speak, an empirical value. It gives us a perspective in which whatever appears obvious to either, may suddenly be seen from an unaccustomed angle.

II.

THE problem I wish to isolate here is one which arises directly from the comparison of the two criticisms: the problem of meaning.

Nothing is more surprising to a Frenchman who is beginning to familiarise himself with English and American criticism—and especially with what is most original and important in them: the influence of that philosophy known as "analytical"—than observing how consistently the notion of meaning is central in all the work of these schools. No doubt it is natural for English poetry to be charged with implications, with allusions and ambiguities. It is a kind of poetry which is always trying to assert something, quite unlike the greatest French poetry from Racine to Rimbaud where the sense is often very simple, logically unanalysable, and quite insufficient to account for the peculiar

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merit of the poem. "Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang"—if I may once again adduce the famous Shakespearean line—is a complex of meanings: and it is possible to trace out their network of associations very far without losing the poetic quality. In contrast, Rimbaud's line, *"Mais que salubre est le vent,"* full of beauty and magic though it may be, *means* very little. English poetry, then, is one which treats meaning as important. But is that a good enough reason for regarding the elucidation of meaning as the fundamental approach to poetic reality? That is the view of I. A. Richards. And it is also that of William Empson who, in *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, lays it down that "poetry is substantially if not entirely a matter of communicated meanings." And this is invariably the central preoccupation of the American followers of the method of "hard reading."

There is one comment which I must hasten to add. Not the least astonishing thing for a French reader is to see how men such as Richards, Empson, and their like, manage to combine this preoccupation with the meaning of poetry with a feeling for poetic reality which is both acute and warm. In France, the kind of mind which could accept Richards' distinction between the two languages, the scientific and the emotive, would despise poetry. One is driven to believe that there is some mysterious compensatory principle in England—and a highly civilising one—which allows Mill to find an affinity in Coleridge, and Richards in poetry, and which would assuredly have enabled Bertrand Russell, if he had only so wished, to become the best literary critic of his day.

But this principle is not enough to rescue the critic from all dangers. I get the impression (but admittedly most of all when faced with certain aspects of American criticism) that preoccupation with what a text "signifies" can often become a kind of mania for reducing the work to the sum of the meanings which it can be found to imply, so as to reassimilate these into ordinary language. The idea that some undiscovered meaning may still subsist in a poem seems to be regarded as scandalous, a blow to collective moral security. And the "explanation" or "analysis" of the poem becomes the catharsis of everything irrational and disturbing which literature can arouse: as if it were the function, even the duty, of criticism to complete that purgation which in a certain sense the poem often initiates; or even to undertake it, come what may, if the poem fails to do so. This is an extreme attitude. But is it not already implicit in the Richards who wrote *Interpretation in Teaching*, which is an attempt to find the final solution of the problem of human communication—and who also collaborated in the invention of Basic English? (It is to be remembered that C. K. Ogden himself translated *Anna Livia Plurabelle* into Basic English.) And I think that this kind of error is always implicit in a criticism founded on the analysis of meaning.

In short (and in this I believe I am expressing a point of view which is very widespread in French criticism, and also bringing out one of the ways in which it would definitely be ranged against the best Anglo-Saxon work) it seems to me that poetic criticism which bases itself on the analysis of meaning is losing sight of its aim. It is allowing itself to be imprisoned in a kind of circle which results from the logical-positivist conception that the cognitive and emotive functions in discourse can be separated. Although *The Meaning of Meaning* of Ogden and Richards is not the sole origin of all modern criticism, and though this criticism has tried to transcend the distinction between the two languages as it was first formulated, it is obvious that this distinction maintains its force and actuality. There are attempts to improve on it; but not to deny it.

WHAT, then, are the limitations which this distinction imposes? For one thing, it makes truth the prerogative of science. A work of literature, since it does not employ scientific method, is *a priori* excluded from "true" discourse. But in such circumstances how can the critic, when speaking of the work of literature, do so without abandoning the categories of scientific truth and reject the advantages of conceptual

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thought? If one performs this task without scruple for objective truth, in an "emotive" language, one continues the proper movement of the poem while renouncing the proper function of criticism. And if, on the contrary, one employs the language of logical statement and verifiable truth, what will happen? Such logical analysis of a poem can only clarify its logical aspects—and since the poem has by definition been located beyond the reach of logic, this would mean a trivialisation of the critic's work. Whatever refinements of meaning may be extracted from the particular subject-matter of a poem by conceptual language, the total result is usually but a degradation of the poem by a scientific conception of truth.

Thus, what is disastrous in this criticism is that the symbolic language of science (of which it can be said, with the Italian critics of Croce's school, that it isn't a language at all) has succeeded in identifying itself with what Cassirer called "the objective pole" in language. But poetry also communicates *what is true, what exists*, and what also, in its own way and in its peculiar field, counts as objective truth (its specific object being the concrete individual). In relation to this objective truth which (provided it is *not* examined with the help of logical categories) is simple and indivisible, the most complex analysis of meaning produces nothing but ghostly abstractions. But here I must make another comment. The distinction between the two languages as seen by Richards cannot be considered apart from the distinction between the sign and the thing signified—in other words, apart from a theory of language as *communicating something*. The "meaning" in the poem would be the way an actual experience of the poet's was represented. The words in the poem would be the reproduction of this experience. But this still misses the specific reality of the poem. For it claims that the *value* of the poem depends on the more or less exceptional quality of an experience which is not in itself æsthetic. And moreover the content of the poem has to be sought in something extra-poetical which is perceived as subsisting the other side of the complex of meanings, and which is itself perhaps only another kind of ghostly abstraction. For it would be easy to demonstrate that this hypothetical experience is in fact nothing but the poem itself under one of its aspects, something to be found only in its particular life and movement: that the words of the poem are not merely signs relating to something signified, but are themselves the activity which brings the poem out of limbo into individual existence.

Poetic activity does not merely assert, it creates. It is not based on the unity of sign and thing signified, but on their disjunction, which is what initiates the specific drama of poetic thought. For what is poetry in reality? The rejection of that part of the object which expresses itself conceptually (or in any kind of logical meaning); the feeling that the concrete reality is lost when the discursive concept it formed; the grudge against having itself to suffer the travail of conceptualising which (from its own exacting angle) is just that very disjunction I have mentioned; and finally the will to rescue what has been lost, a realism of the depths, which can only come to birth obliquely and through struggle.

It is a striking fact that similar conclusions have been arrived at even by the criticism most intimately connected with, or derived from, logical positivism: by Empson in his penetrating analysis of Marvell's *The Garden* and by some of the New Critics who have studied irony, tension, and paradox. But, in their case, the conclusions are also paradoxical or veiled, because these critics define tension, paradox, and ambiguity as dependent notions arising from the consideration of conceptual meaning. Even with Archibald MacLeish, when he says "A poem should not mean but be," this "being" of the poem is still conceived as a complex of meanings, the difference being that the reference is internal not external. For MacLeish, "meaning" is still the substance of poetry.

III

IT MAY seem that in this discussion of some of the ideas of analytical criticism I have got very far away from my original proposi-

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tion which was to contrast French and Anglo-Saxon criticism. But I believe that this is not at all the case, and that in order to give a picture of recent French criticism I need do nothing more than follow out the main lines of the controversy which I have sketched above. Basically the two criticisms are almost complementary. To a large extent, either of them could be taken as a criticism of the other. Not that minds which are very close to Anglo-Saxon formalism cannot be found in France: however Marxist he may be, this is true of Roland Barthes. But the best French criticism would range itself against the analysis of meaning. To-day no French critic would admit that a poem can be reduced to what it explicitly or implicitly asserts. For though logical positivists exist in France, they have, as I have already indicated, absolutely no understanding of literature; and if they concern themselves with criticism, there need be no hesitation in saying that their work is not of the slightest interest. On the other hand, the influence of the great 19th-century poets, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Rimbaud, and more recently of surrealism, has profoundly regenerated the whole conception of poetry by emphasising that its value is non-rational and subjective.

Marcel Raymond's *De Baudelaire au surréalisme* and Albert Béguin's *L'Ame romantique et le réve* marked the first stages of this development. Feeling was at the very core of Béguin's method. He set out to study what is most elusive and least analysable in the imaginative activity, the obscure connection between dream and waking life, which he claimed as an essential element in poetic creation. And it must even be noted that Béguin undertook this without any recourse to Freudianism, because he realised its links with the rationalist philosophy of the Enlightenment. He laid great stress on the fluid nature of signs, the continual shifts in their content, the essential use and validity of analogy which goes beyond any finite signification into the very heart of the existent. And thus at the very moment when the greater part of Anglo-Saxon criticism was following T. S. Eliot in refusing to be seduced by the romantic lure, and was favouring instead the kind of mathematical precision of meaning and structure which was to be found in John Donne and Bishop King, Béguin and Raymond went to the opposite extreme and looked to essential romanticism for that sense of the transcendental which overthrows all rational intention and deflects words from merely signifying.

Gaston Bachelard is unquestionably the most striking example of this determination to resist the domination of sign by sense. Although he is himself a rationalist philosopher and a scientific theoretician, the standpoint that he takes in the series of works which he has devoted to the study of poetic imagination (*L'Eau et les rêves, l'Air et les songes*, etc., and quite recently, *La Poétique et l'espace*) is diametrically opposed to logical positivism. For he is interested in imagery just in so far as it succeeds in shattering any kind of signification which tries to erect itself upon it. In Bachelard's thinking, the image is a continual dialectical struggle with the concept, and it is the image, the absolute and impersonal image, which bodies forth poetical intuition. And the latter is something beyond the imagination of ideal forms with which it would be easier to associate a logic of meaning; it is instead the sense of material nature, of things in their most intimate existence. Bachelard has studied the varieties of dust, whirlwinds, fire, the sense of the spatial conveyed by nooks and crannies, all the things which poetry knows by instinct but only communicates in the teeth of any of the significations which it may be made to bear. And for Georges Poulet and Jean-Pierre Richard too, that is the nature of poetry—an experience of the depths where first of all the poet is submerged and then retrieves himself, where he lets language go only to re-form it the other side of a kind of silence. If, as far as Poulet and Richard are concerned, the poem has an interpretable meaning, it does not arise from the interconnections of words but in that complex of sensations and images which the words let fall, in a stress, a pause, a sort of hesitation in their explicit assertion.

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And it is obviously when the conceptual meaning of the poem is at its slightest and most indefinite, that this kind of criticism is most efficacious. Baudelaire's *"Le Guignon,"* analysed by Richard, comes to my mind. There are six very fine lines but without any subtle signification, ambiguity, or paradox.

Maint joyau dort enseveli
Dans les ténèbres et l'oubli,
Bien loin des pierres et des sondes.

Mainte fleur épanche à regret
Son parfum doux comme un secret
Dans les solitudes profondes.

Where are we to look for the essential quality, the truth of these lines? Jean-Pierre Richard sees in them a detached and irrational symbol of Baudelaire himself, of what he is, not of what he intends to tell us. "Baudelaire," he writes, "is in fact himself this sleeping buried jewel, this being detached from being, this consciousness which is always at a remove from itself and from its object, and lost in the unfathomable." In the very idea of this buried jewel (as we envisage it in imagination) there is at one and the same time a feeling of remoteness and of nearness, of darkness and light intermingled. The feeling of the lost and remote expressed in the first three lines "enfolds a sense of proximity, suggests inwardness." In fact, what is sleeping can awake, can expand and burst into flower and exhale perfume which is simultaneously a message and a self-withholding, a "disclosure of being" in which it is possible to recognise, in symbolic language, the essential nature of poetic expression. In an earlier version of the three last lines which Richard quotes, Baudelaire had written

Mainte fleur épanche en secret
Son parfum doux comme un regret
Dans les solitudes profondes.

and the change from this more abstract notation to the final version clearly shows the development of an intuition which is really of an existential kind, and which discerns in every entity a secret, an impulse reined, a step towards us, glimpsed departing.

No doubt I have not conveyed everything that Jean-Pierre Richard intended, but I do not think I have belied the real spirit of his method. Is this a matter of verbal analysis, comparable with Blackmur's "hard reading"? No, because Blackmur and Empson see in the poem the sum total of primary and secondary meaning whereas here the deepest significance is sought beyond any meaning whatsoever, in the *affinity* of words and idea, in a relation of word to thought which like Baudelaire's jewel is at one and the same time proximity and distance, logical remoteness and analogical closeness. Richard takes his position in the twilight zone of language where truth is felt rather than formulated. This kind of criticism seems to me to be more capable of grasping the nature and function of metaphor than Anglo-Saxon criticism which has tended to avoid this problem.

And, lastly, Maurice Blanchot who is even more radical. In *Lautrémont et Sade* and quite recently in *L'Espace littéraire* he has overtly criticised the analysis of meaning and every other kind of analytical method. He even goes so far as to maintain that the content of the poem cannot be expressed within the categories of truth, for these cannot help subsuming, under the general and impersonal, something which is by nature unique. The essence of literature is not to be found in what it explicitly asserts but in its continual annihilation of the meanings which language forces it to compound with, in its flight towards its goal of silence. The poem exists in an "essential solitude," an eternal separation. Is this in any way comparable to the idea of "cutting off" in the new criticism? No, for this eternal isolation of the literary creation does not, according to Blanchot, arise from a crystallisation within what the Americans call the structure of the poem, but is something which tends to break down any kind of structure, because it is man's relation with nothingness and death. This is something so remote from the "true" or the "real," from any of the realities of which meaning is a sign, that Blanchot speaks unequivocally of the "anonymity" of the greatest poetry.

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The question here is not one of examining this view, certainly not of criticising it, but merely of stressing once more that in its opposition to the analytical approach it is profoundly representative of contemporary practice in France. "I have always found concepts less important than obsessions" remarks Jean-Pierre Richard. Generally speaking, what these critics are trying to do is to re-live the poet's unanalysable experience, that which words are deemed never to express but which can be felt in those very words just in so far as they are not its explicit expression.

IV

THE limitations of this criticism are obvious: and I can well imagine that the first reaction of an English reader will be to say that it isn't even criticism. This, which I read recently in the *Times Literary Supplement*, was put forward as self-evident: "The job of the critic is to distinguish between the good and the bad; and more importantly, between the good and the best." Now there is no question that the function of appreciation, the preoccupation with distinguishing between the good and the bad, and the good and the best, finds the French critic of to-day (with a few exceptions from Henriot to Picon and Nadeau) singularly ill-equipped. He can see how the poem is a kind of knowledge—or as we like to put it "experience"—and what it is knowledge of, but he does not find it easy to distinguish why or even how it is beautiful. In particular, he neglects formal values whose importance is recognised by Anglo-Saxon criticism. And he is assuredly wrong, for if the poem is not inherently a thing (and that it is so, Anglo-Saxon criticism is too much inclined to believe) but an activity, that is no excuse for forgetting that the poet is ceaselessly preoccupied with what is material in the poem, even if only for the purpose of struggling with it and finally transcending it. So much so that formal values, rhythms, texture, etc., are really decisive even when the poem transcends them, indeed especially when this is so. Mallarmé as well as Hopkins would be a good example.

The poem is the struggle between the conceptual meaning, which tends to establish itself in precise sign-language and to find support in the sign's most objective characteristics, and an intuition which transcends all signification and forces the sign to stop short of precise definition. French and Anglo-Saxon criticism each support one side of this profound struggle which is in itself a creative act. What would constitute a complete criticism? One day perhaps there will be a dialogue between the two criticisms and we shall be able to see what it would be like.

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Erskine B. Childers

Impasse in the Holy Land

With Some Suggestions for its Resolution

IT WAS March, 1957. A warm breeze blew gently across the Canal from the wide golden wastes of Sinai, making a proud show of the blue U.N. flag over El Ballah U.N.E.F. camp. From the north, a U.N. salvage vessel's winch clattered faintly down the still-empty waterway. Small birds darted in and out of a bullet-riddled car lying off the Port Said–Suez highway. Swift and clean in flight, they seemed delighted to have the place to themselves for a change—and quite oblivious of the strange, unreal atmosphere. The dream of de Lesseps was resting before some new storm. Israel had just announced final withdrawal of her victorious forces.

The Old Hand broke a long, mutual silence imposed by the surface tranquillity, and yet underlying menace, of the whole scene. His voice was weary—not bitter, but the voice of a Westerner whose conscience had been torn apart during two decades in the Middle East. He said:

"I wish I could be so confident about these U.N. flags all around here. Oh, I agree, U.N.E.F. is a great step forward. But for the last ten years, we've done our best to smash the United Nations out here by giving it utterly impossible tasks—problems we've given up trying to handle."

I observed that, surely, U.N.E.F. was at least a new moral force in the Arab–Israeli conflict.

"Yes, it is—but for how long, and with what strength when the next test comes? I'll lay a bet with you: in one year from now, the whole Palestine mess will still be there. All the grave nodding of heads in the past few months—all the assertions that 'this time' something must be done—will evaporate. The yellow press will find something else to scream about, and this whole crisis will be forgotten. But it'll go on getting more and more dangerous—and next *time, well, next time we won't get out of it so easily."*

The Old Hand's prediction echoes gloomily in one's mind to-day, just over a year and a half since the brief Sinai war was formally concluded by Israel's withdrawal. He was right, of course. The Western press did find new alarums. The ringing editorials and high official statements of November, 1956, have been forgotten. The occasional proposals for new peace efforts in Palestine are as barren and futile as ever. And the conflict, the explosive potential of the Holy Land impasse, has steadily increased.

IT SEEMS almost absurd to re-define the elements of danger in Palestine. Yet such is our capacity for forgetting, so easily do we breathe a sigh of relief and resume a posture of scepticism when crisis headlines disappear, that it really is necessary. Before even trying to get to the roots of the Arab–Israeli conflict, I should like to make two brief surveys: first, of the likely causes of another round in the Arab–Israeli war; secondly, of the net results of Israeli's Sinai attack.

Unless there is at least a beginning of serious negotiations for peace, the next ex-

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plosion may follow one or more of these trends:

1. The status of the U.N. Emergency Force will be challenged by Egypt, and the Force will have to be withdrawn. It is either virtually forgotten, or was never widely realised in the West, that this tiny force is stationed *on Egyptian territory only*; and that, under its mandate, it can remain there only with Egypt's continued approval. Israel refuses to allow U.N.E.F. units to operate within her borders. Sooner or later—and for whatever reason—Egypt is going to withdraw her consent to this implicitly derogatory situation. As matters stand, the U.N. General Assembly will have no choice but to comply. When this happens, the full *status quo ante* of the Arab–Israeli conflict will be restored. There will, once more, be nothing between the two sides save an Armistice line, respect for which is patently slender; and the handful of U.N. Truce Observers who have never enjoyed much respect either.

2. Whether U.N.E.F. remains or not, the Israeli–Jordanian frontier, 350 miles long, is as explosive to-day as it was before Sinai. It is potentially even more dangerous, because the new federation of Jordan and Iraq heralds a move against which Israel has repeatedly warned that she "reserves full liberty of action." If this frontier flares up again, Iraqi forces may be moved into position west of the Jordan River. An Israeli "preventive" attack to meet this danger is very much more likely, on the evidence, than was the Sinai attack.

3. Once a year, U.N.R.W.A.—the Relief Agency for Palestine's 930,000 Arab refugees—faces drastic curtailment of its work through lack of funds. This year, spokesmen warned of the possibility of "grave disorder" among the refugees unless U.N. Members maintained financial support of the Agency. There is every reason to believe that 1959 will bring another financial crisis and, again, the ugly prospect of mass action by hundreds of thousands of these exiles in Gaza, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. Over 250,000 are camped close to Israel. If they ran amok into Israel, war would almost certainly follow.

4. The arms race continues. On the day that one side or the other announces the purchase of missile-type weapons, or forecasts possession of nuclear weapons, on that day tension in and around Israel will increase absolutely, and war by one or the other side is virtually certain to follow.

These are but some of the most likely dangers. In citing them, I may well provoke the rejoinder, "You could start predicting like that for any trouble-spot, anywhere." To this I can only reply that if nothing before 29th October, 1956, suggests it, then the world's close shave over Sinai surely confirms that there cannot be too much prediction about this particular trouble-spot. Nothing, not one single event since the cease-fire in Sinai, offers the slightest ray of hope that the Palestine conflict is slowing down its dynamism. Nothing is static about it. The Sinai attack did not change the basic conditions of danger; indeed, it reinforced them.

I should like, next, to support that assertion. It is of the utmost importance to ask what Israel's leaders hoped to gain, in Sinai, over what they were bound to lose. We must ask this, not as a mere historical exercise, but because in the answer may lie the truest measure, and the most dramatic illustration, of the sheer menace and futility of the present impasse between the Arabs and Israel.

1. Even if we assume full Anglo–French–Israeli collusion, we have to credit Israel's leaders with far too much intelligence to presume that the world of 1956 would long allow an occupation of Egypt. Similarly, it is insulting to their intelligence to presume that they hoped for an Egyptian régime any more conciliatory towards Israel after the demise of Abdul Nasser. A forcible occupation might have produced concessions about the Suez Canal. An occupation following an Israeli assault against Egypt could not, by its very nature, produce peace talks on Palestine with any Egyptian régime.

2. If we reject collusion: did Israel really believe she would be allowed to keep all Sinai and Gaza on security grounds? If not, how was she going to prevent resumption of the *fedayin* raids, whose origins in the Sinai Desert she alleged were a prime cause of her attack? Does she expect the U.N. to be able to station a large buffer force, indefinitely, on Egyptian soil but not on the Israeli side of the frontier?

Could Israel's leaders have possibly believed that a victory in Sinai would teach the Egyptians, *and* all the other Arab States, a long-term lesson? Did they expect it to result in an *end* of Arab purchases of Soviet-bloc weapons?

3. Above all else, did Israel's leaders hope that a dramatic, evidently despairing preventive attack would galvanise the world into *forcing* the Arabs to accept Israel's peace terms and Israel's existence? Other factors apart, was the rôle of cold-war and oil politics in the Arab–Israeli dispute to disappear with this attack?

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These are precisely the factors that Israel constantly asserts have prevented full international pressure on the Arabs to "accept" the Jewish State.

And if *imposition* of peace on the Arab States was not what Israel hoped to gain in Sinai, what is left?

ON EVERY possible estimate, one is left with little more than desperation—the desperate hope of a stubborn, incredibly tough little nation that a victory in Sinai could *buy time*. It would, at the least temporarily, halt the increasing posture of aggression that Tel-Aviv saw in Egypt's arms purchases and propaganda. It would instil fear among Egyptian troops, and rob them of many of their new weapons. It might deflate Abdul Nasser's leadership throughout the Arab world, and impose caution on other Arab Governments that had shown readiness to follow Cairo.

Did this desperate hope pay off? An estimate of the results of Sinai, eighteen months after the event, is very sobering. Israel had to retreat. Her "one true alliance" with France reinforced the forty-year Arab fear that Zionism is "an imperialist catspaw"—and thus forged a still more solid bond between classic Arab nationalism and the special resentment over the Palestine record. Her defeat of the Egyptians was obscured before Arab public opinion by the same process. Even if Abdul Nasser had broadcast *the precise truth* of the Sinai defeat over Cairo Radio, it would not have damaged Egypt's stature. No serious ignominy falls on a nationalist régime, in an ex-colonial country, through defeat inflicted with the help of one or more Great Powers.

Israel's seizure of Soviet-bloc weapons simply redoubled Egypt's and Syria's efforts to obtain more, and from the same source if no others were available. It undoubtedly instilled a hearty respect for Israeli soldiery in the rank and file of Egypt's army. But this is a transient element; it *passes*, ironically, *with time*, and with the possession of new modern weapons. It is surely no factor on which to pin hope of security for Israel.

The Sinai attack impressed hatred of Israel deeper into the Arab populations than ever before. It made inflammatory leadership a hundred times easier, conciliation a hundred times more difficult for any Arab statesmen to attempt. It also reinforced the urge to Arab unity—that very unity, the lack of which secured Israel her victory in 1948–49, the fear of which she has always voiced in the most candid terms. The crisis in Jordan last year, and the fall of the Nabulsi Cabinet, were direct results of this post-Sinai wave of urgency about Arab union. The intended merger of Jordan with Egypt and Syria was halted by King Hussein with Eisenhower Doctrine support and weapons, against the certain wishes of Jordan's Palestinian majority. The Doctrine weapons so sensationally delivered to King Hussein may have been intended to be aimed against Moscow and "anti-Western" Arab movements. But they will point towards Israel first and always, whatever Washington may naïvely hope. The same may be said of all other American weapons supplies to Arab States since Sinai.

The culmination, to date, of these political effects of the Sinai attack is a new situation around Israel's borders that offers ever less comfort for her unfortunate citizens. Egypt and Syria have now united. Sneers over the probable efficacy of the United Arab Republic are inevitable, but they are foolhardy in the extreme when applied to Israel. This union has consolidated the political power of two of the most hostile forces in the Arab world: the officers of Egypt and Syria, and progressive nationalism represented in the Ba'ath Al-Arabiya Party. (Again, ironically, the first glimmerings of that "socialism" whose absence from the Arab scene Israeli Socialists have long deplored.) In addition, the rival federation of Jordan and Iraq presents the danger for Israel already mentioned —the combining of the Jordanian armed forces with Iraq's well-trained and well-equipped services. The new contest between Cairo and Baghdad for maximum anti-Israeli propaganda is also most unhealthy.

In short, if time was bought in Sinai, it has not alleviated by one iota the basic threats to Israel's security and progress. The conclusion

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to be drawn from this, however, is even more serious. Ever since it became clear that Israel's peace terms, and those of the Arab States, were totally incompatible, Israel's policy has been based on this thesis of time, *the thesis of attrition*. Given the impasse in arriving at peace terms, it has been held, time would wither away the Arabs' intransigence. In time, the sheer fact of Israel's stubborn existence would be borne in on the Arabs; the hollowness of their leaders' promises to eliminate Israel would be realised; the absorption of Arab revenues in arms would anger peoples urgently seeking better standards of living; the futility of the Arab demand for refugee repatriation would be recognised by the refugees themselves. Time would also consolidate Israel's present borders in the eyes of the rest of the world. It would allow greater Jewish immigration, in turn making even more physically impossible any reduction of Israel's territory, or readmission of Arab exiles.

I CAN only say that, on balance, the evidence of ten years does not support the attrition thesis—not on any single count. It is not enough to see what has happened since Sinai. It is essential to realise that, since the creation of the State of Israel in mid-1948, "time" has produced revolution in Syria (the Zaim *coup* of 1949, whose full effects we are now witnessing); and revolution in Egypt resulting in the dynamic leadership of Abdul Nasser. "Time" has brought the involvement of the Soviet Union in Palestine—the nullification indeed, of the very American–Russian agreement that facilitated the creation of Israel in 1948. "Time," accompanied inevitably by border raids and Israeli retaliations, has steadily pressed hatred of Zionism and Israel deeper and wider among Arab peoples. Every month since 1948, more Arabs have learned about Israel, the refugees, the history of what they all, inevitably and quite irrevocably, regard as a monstrous injustice. "Time" has allowed Arab purchase of new weapons and the training of new armies. And finally, "time" produced Sinai itself.

No, the attrition thesis might work *if* Israel's frontiers were sealed off, inviolate to major or minor Arab attacks; *if* Israel's leaders did not feel compelled to make periodic thrusts like that of Sinai, or retaliations like that against Gaza in 1955, or Qalqilya in 1956; *if* Israel had reached her population goals; *if* there could be Great Power agreement not to arm, or champion, either side; *if* the Arab refugees, and Arab Governments, were not able to invoke, quite legitimately, the U.N. Resolution 194 of December, 1948, urging a *choice* of repatriation or compensation . . . if, if, if. The conditions do not apply, and are most unlikely to apply.

And if attrition has not worked, even in degree over ten years, then it should be plain that nothing else will bring the Arabs to accept Israel's peace terms, or *vice versa*. I say that it should be plain, but it is not. There still circulates the other hope—that peace could somehow be *imposed*, by international force, around Palestine; that the Arab States surrounding Israel could be more or less forced to accept her present frontiers. If, the argument goes, neither side will budge from its present demands, then it behoves the rest of the world to take the fuse out of this keg of dynamite by compulsory means. I suggest that this vague idea should be put aside for once and for all. It simply does not withstand detailed examination. Given the present impasse between the two "peace" terms, it would mean:

1. Establishing around Israel a permanent buffer force in such numbers as to make impossible any overt aggression, or covert frontier violation, by either side; such a force to be imposed on both sides even if they refuse its entry, and to be maintained in virtual perpetuity;

2. Compelling Egypt, by force if necessary, to render the Suez Canal always and fully accessible to vessels serving Israel;

3. Compelling the Arab States to accept 930,000 refugees for resettlement, and then compelling the 930,000 themselves, if necessary at gunpoint, to move from their present camps and dwellings;

4. Effecting a rigid, absolutely watertight embargo on the movement of all armaments into either the Arab States or Israel, and from whatever source, Western or Communist; and exer-

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cising some sound measure of control over the internal production of weapons.

Are not these minimum compulsory steps obviously impossible? Whether one examines them from a purely regional viewpoint, or within the context of the cold war, oil politics, and the general dispositions of U.N. General Assembly votes, it is surely clear that the imposition of "peace" in Palestine is a pipedream.

I HAVE dwelt at some length on these hypotheses because they do, unfortunately, form the currency of thinking about Palestine. The concepts of attrition, of "guaranteeing frontiers," of imposing solutions, are the legacies of 1947—a year in which the General Assembly of the United Nations took perhaps its most discreditable decision. I say this not with any thought of the merits or demerits of Partition in Palestine as such, but simply because by November of that year it was as clear as day that the mere passing of a recommendation would solve nothing in the Holy Land. I have not the least doubt that future historians, thoroughly divorced by time from any direct emotional bias, will observe that the General Assembly, having seized itself of the Palestine dispute, and by its resolution made chaos and bloodshed certain, then virtually abdicated its responsibility.

The U.N., in 1947, did not possess, and was manifestly unwilling to create, the necessary power to enforce a recommendation that was rejected with violence by one side, and interpreted as an international sanction by the other; a sanction implying the right to proceed with implementing half of the recommendation by whatever means, including force. It is absurd to deride the U.N., as some entity in itself, for this whole lamentable record. The fault lay with its members. A bare two-thirds of them, after a most unseemly last-minute shuffle of reluctant votes, *recommended* the creation of an Arab and a Jewish State, linked in economic union. Before the decision, and most certainly within hours of its announcement, it was absolutely clear that it would bring war. As several months of violence went by, it became so obvious that the Partition scheme was unworkable that the United States actually pronounced this verdict (Mr. Truman, 25th March, 1948). Yet within two more months, the State of Israel had been proclaimed on the basis of a supposed U.N. "mandate" whose *full* terms (concurrent Arab Statehood and economic union) had already been nullified.

I would suggest that this sorry episode be remembered carefully to-day, not in any spirit of partisanship, but because it teaches the one vital lesson that can possibly lead to a settlement in Palestine. Where force cannot be applied, where two parties to an international dispute are seized of totally incompatible ideas of "justice" that cannot be reconciled by the community of nations, there remains only one yardstick by which peace can be realistically sought. That yardstick is to examine what mode of conduct between nation-states with Palestine's history behind them can reasonably be demanded, and what *reasonable fears* must be allayed in any peace negotiations. I should like to try to support this thesis, and apply it to the present tragedy of Palestine, in the hope that we can try again before this dynamic conflict engulfs us all.

FIRST, however, I must meet and try to deal with one of the worst, most genuinely pathetic aspects of this dispute. Anyone who has ever tried to discuss a Palestine solution based on some new compromise has learned to his sorrow that he must first state his *bona fides*. In the very utterance of the phrase "new compromise," friends of Israel go on guard against signs of anti-Semitism, friends of the Arabs against signs of "Zionist infection." This acute sensitivity is of an unique order, far transcending the partisanship that often enters a debate in which the respective sides have firm friends.

In the Palestine dispute there are deep, special, and unique emotional and cultural influences at work in Western opinion. We are all, in the West, involved emotionally in the fate of world Jewry. As a civilisation we carry a profound sense of guilt that spans

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two thousand years, culminating in our sense of responsibility for the rise of the Nazi horror. We have special feelings about the Holy Land. And in some of us—let us, for goodness sake, not mince words—there is latent or active anti-Semitism.

On the other hand, and especially in Britain, there is a deep and equally complex attachment to the Arabs: an attachment born of generations of service in the Arab world, and reinforced by the Lawrence story, both its myth and its reality. It would need a small book to analyse Western attitudes towards the Arabs as a civilisation and a people. It would involve the "Thousand and One Nights"; the story of Charles Martel and Tours; the Crusades; the lure of the desert (sister-fascination to high mountains and vast oceans) and of Bedu culture; Kitchener and Lawrence—yes, and even Rudolf Valentino. This is no more the place to discuss the Western–Arab relationship than to analyse the disease of anti-Semitism, its sources and nourishment.

But since it is necessary to meet the instant fears of prejudice, and however revolting the necessity is, I can only plead that I have worked with Jewish organisations; have specifically worked in the United States to combat anti-Semitism in universities and civic communities; and that my stomach turns when I hear decent, honourable people mouth such phrases as "Jew-boy." On the other side, I can only say that I was born and bred in an atmosphere of nationalism, and understand both its springs and sewers, its inevitability and its obsolescence. I have found, throughout the modern Arab world (and I went armed with caution against facile parallels), a pattern of principle and emotion common to nationalism in Ireland, South Asia, and elsewhere. I respect it, lament its weaknesses, praise its nobilities. I revolt as much against the fashionable Western sneer towards the Arabs as I do against earlier sneers about "half-naked fakirs" in India.

I therefore hope that, if protagonists of both sides have even read thus far without disgust, they will accompany me on an attempt to reach the heart of the Palestinian conflict; will accept that, if I ignore routine arguments, or even use them, it is in the spirit of justice *now*, for both sides. I stress the "now" because the history of Palestine since 1917 is pocked and scarred with *in*justice on both sides. There is no solution, now, that can serve one single, retroactive theme of justice.

That, indeed, is the essential prerequisite to any calm approach to a solution. As Arthur Koestler has rightly pointed out, in Palestine two totally incompatible "universes of discourse," or frames of reference for "justice," are involved. It is useless to expect the Arabs to accept as "just" the Zionist's ancient claim to the Holy Land, the Balfour Declaration that gave it scope, or the rest of the world's recognition of the new, sovereign state we imposed by resolution, and then irresolution, on Palestine. It is equally useless to ask of world Jewry that they should now reject as invalid the body of religio-historical argument, or forget the long nightmare of persecution and the pioneering effort, that they consider gives them a different claim on "justice" in Palestine. We are also dealing with the fact—and we should not blind ourselves to it—that we are willing to tolerate ideas, and depart from principles and precedents, in a remote land and civilisation precisely because it *is* remote, shadowy, beyond our own horizon. It is surely safe to say, today, that a Balfour Declaration could never have been made for any territory in Europe or North America. This involves no particular reflection on the Jewish campaign for a National Home and a State in the Holy Land. But we must, again, remember it as part of the legacy. By mid-1948, we had given varying forms of moral and legal sanction to the two "universes of discourse" that were already in conflict in Palestine. I can see no purpose, if it is peace that we seek, in trying in mid-1958 to find some common thesis of justice that reconciles all that happened after the Balfour Declaration.

YET if we slip from the search for a single morality, we are instantly in the sphere of pragmatism, of what is real, concrete, "the

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here and now." A combination of disgust, guilt, and exasperation does indeed drive most of us to take this view of Palestine to-day. What happened, happened, it is said: we must simply cut our losses and get on with the job of patching up the fiasco. And this, quite inevitably, leads to the view that *the Arabs* must cut their losses, and accept Israel as a fact, "there to stay." We should be careful in accepting this as the plane of debate—careful to realise that we are still not moving in a purely pragmatic sphere. To those who cling to one of the "universes of discourse," namely the Arabs, there is nothing pragmatic about such a demand. It still involves a fundamental injustice, as they see it.

There is, in my view, no doubt whatever that the Arabs will have to accept Israel's existence, and come to terms with the Jewish State. But I do not believe that this is really the problem. "Accepting Israel's existence" is a glib phrase, a facile concept, that obscures the real challenge of Palestine to world diplomacy. The real challenge is this: what *kind* of Israel must the Arabs accept? Reverting to my earlier definition of the only applicable yardstick, the challenge can be put another way. What fears can the Arabs reasonably ask should first be allayed? Do Israel's present peace terms meet those reasonable fears? The same must be asked in converse: what reasonable Israeli fears must be met in the terms of any settlement?

If we pose these questions honestly, we come to the preliminary conclusion that Israel has by far the "better" set of terms—better, that is, in the sense that they are far more concrete, more related to "the facts" to-day in Palestine. Israel wants her present frontiers accepted by the Arabs, subject only to minor adjustments (*i.e.*, where a Judaean village is now cut in two by the Armistice line). She offers compensation to the 930,000 Arab refugees, and help in their resettlement; but refuses to admit them all to their former lands and homes. Israel would provide a land corridor between Egypt and the eastern Arab world, and would restore the road and rail routes over the Holy Land. She would grant Jordan a free port at Haifa. She would collaborate in the development of the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers, and in other regional programmes. She demands the ending of the Arab commercial and communications blockade; the guarantee of her borders against raids or full-scale aggression; and internationally-supported peace treaties to ensure all these conditions.

Against these offers, the Arab States will go no further than to insist that any peace negotiations must be based on the U.N.'s 1947 resolution—that is, on the Partition recommendation, reversion to which would deprive Israel of much of the extra territory she won in the 1948–49 war. (That war, Israel points out, began by Arab defiance of the very U.N. vote they now invoke.) The Arabs also demand that the 1948 U.N. resolution (G.A. 194), urging a *choice* of repatriation or compensation, be implemented for the refugees. After these two key conditions, all else, which could be negotiated, falls away into futility. There is no public hint of compromise: the Arabs are just as vociferously opposed to some half-way position over territory as are the Israelis.

AT THIS point it must be entered in the record that one of the most disturbing features of the Arab campaign is the inconsistency between what they formally propose for negotiations, and what their leaders and radio programmes actually promise. There is no doubt whatever that the Arab States have gravely damaged their case to the world by three actions: their invasion of the new State of Israel in mid-1948; their constant propaganda threats of "driving Israel into the sea" even after they signed Armistice Agreements; and the formal institution of *fedayin* terrorist raids into Israel. They really do seem to be their own worst enemies. The posture of menace they have adopted has convinced very many people beyond the Middle East that their formal peace terms are deliberately chosen as the least negotiable; that they have, in fact, only one aim: to exterminate Israel by force.

It is precisely at this point that the premium on genuine impartiality in studying the

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Palestine problem becomes so high. Applying our *normal* code of conduct between nation-states, the verdict against the Arabs is devastating. Using this yardstick, their actions and words since mid-1948 far outweigh anything the Israelis have done: far outweigh Israel's share of obstruction of the U.N. Truce Teams; her large, fully military retaliations; her stand on the refugee issue; and Sinai. But I must risk the accusation of bias, and even of naïveté, in asserting that the yardstick by which we come to these conclusions is useless in Palestine. It requires the premise that Israel is a normal nation-state not merely in jurisprudence, *but in terms of the history, and the future, that she presents to her neighbours.*

I must also assert, from months of discussion in confidence with Arab leaders, intellectuals, political opposition members, that they *know* that *an* Israel is "there to stay." Their bitterness does not totally blind them to reality. They would be ready, in the right atmosphere and over a period of time, to negotiate their acceptance of *a* Jewish State —if their one overwhelming, all-pervading fear could be met and allayed. *That fear is of Jewish immigration leading to further Jewish expansionism.* I say "further" because every Arab, whether sober intellectual or militant politician, regards the whole history of Palestine since 1917 as one of Jewish expansionism. And nothing, no amount of persuasion or argument, will change this view of the past; nor, I believe, can any honest Israeli leader expect such a change. It is, indeed, one of the concessions he or she should be willing to make: that to the Arabs, the growth of the Jewish community of Palestine, from some 80,000 scattered settlers in 1917 to nation-statehood with over 1,600,000 in 1958, *is* a form of expansionism, and cannot possibly be seen in any other light.

The above assertions positively demand explanation. First, *is* Jewish immigration and expansionism the real Arab fear, the cause of their hostility? I have heard dozens of other explanations, and the main ones should briefly be examined. Vengeance—sheer "Moorish" vengeance—is one thesis. I doubt that this is worth much treatment, but it must be observed that Arab hostility far antedated the creation of an Israeli State, or even the massive pressure of Zionism after Hitler's pogroms. The people of Israel should realise that they are dealing, not with the sudden blood-lust of a few fanatics, but with moderate, educated Arabs too—Arabs whose intellectual background is predominantly Western; Christian Arabs no less than Moslems, intellectuals who deride their own political leaders, who have the most profound respect, as academicians, for Hebrew culture. Vengeance plays its part. But it is not the dominant factor.

If not vengeance, is it that Zionism and Israel offer a convenient scapegoat for decadent Arab régimes under pressure for their own corruption and failures? Again, this is and has been an element. But to fasten on it as the basic factor is folly, blind folly for Israel. The trouble so often is that lack of contact breeds these easy illusions. How to convince Israelis, and their friends abroad, that the most progressive, Western-educated Arabs, people who want nothing so much as an end of feudalism and corruption, express the same hostility? I can say with conviction that if every one of the Governments on Israel's borders was in the hands of democratic, Western-inspired, socialist Arabs, there would still be this fundamental hostility, and fear. Peace treaties would *not* have been signed by now.

Then is it fear of Israel's example? The answer is much the same. I should estimate that this thesis of example is the most common illusion in the Western world: the thesis of fear of a dynamic, democratic, socially-progressive Jewish nation's impact on Islamic culture, Arab commerce, Arab feudalism. To this it must be said that Islam is not the ruling force in Arab politics to-day; nor is feudalism. The Egyptian military leader who smashed the Moslem Brotherhood; the Ba'ath Socialists (most of them educated at the American University of Beirut) who seek to revolutionise Arab society and are utterly opposed to Islamic clericalism—they are, if anything, more hostile to Israel. One finds, if

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one travels through the contemporary Arab world, that those with the strongest sentiments and tightest arguments about Israel are exactly the people who wish to put into practice, in their own countries, the basic secular tenets underlying Israeli political and economic thinking.

No, the example thesis will not do. Much of its strength in the West arises, again, from lack of true information about the complexion of Arab politics and society; from the sweeping assumption that the whole Arab world reeks with decadence, feudal oppression, corruption, and religious fanaticism. I am sorry to say that I have seen too often that Israel, and her friends, have cultivated this assumption. It does *not* work in her favour.

In summary, I must urge that none of these supposed prime causes of Arab hostility towards Israel meets the test of fact, and of history. All are used at different times, by different people. I have heard the same protagonist of Israel suggest, in virtually the same breath, that Israel's problem with Egypt has been that of being a scapegoat for a feudal monarchy, followed by being a victim of demagogic "Nasserism." But in between these two extremes, there was General Neguib, himself a victim of "Nasserism." And he it was who wrote (in *Egypt's Destiny*):

> "If Israel wishes to live in peace with its Arab neighbours, it must call a halt to unrestricted immigration in preparation for military expansion in the future.... I do not feel that we are being unreasonable in placing the burden of proof on Israel. Israel, after all, is the interloper ... surely we have the right to demand that our new neighbour prove himself a good neighbour before we accept him as a member of our community?"

THIS is the universal, the fundamental, Arab view. I must confess that it is, to me, one of the most extraordinary phenomena of modern world opinion that such a view has been so utterly ignored. The common denominator of every high-level discussion I have had in the Arab world is this factor of "the interloper" and of "burden of proof." No amount of mere "realism," of realising that a State of Israel does exist with world-wide diplomatic recognition, can simply remove from the Arab mind the fear that peace now, on Israel's terms, will only be another beginning to another wave of expansionism.

I have repeatedly put the question which may occur to the reader: if Jewish immigration and expansionism is the fear, why do Arab peace proposals not openly and explicitly express that fear? The replies have been identical—and, I should add, have come long after that first half-hour, the journalist's nightmare, when the statesman or politician feels he must deliver himself of a sort of routine polemic which, like Ustinov's envoys, he knows that you know that he knows *is* routine polemic. Let me paraphrase this common reply:

> "What do you think we tried to tell the West all through the years up to 1947? We tried, over and over again, to explain our fear of this mass Jewish immigration under Zionism—which is not the same thing as Judaism at all. Will you deny that any Western leader who opposes Zionism gets himself branded an anti-Semitic? If this can happen in the West, what chance have we—especially now that Israel is a sovereign state with sovereign rights of immigration?"

The argument quickly becomes emotional. But is there nothing in it that deserves more thought? Let me reiterate: my purpose, here, is to determine quite coldly whether the fears we can consider reasonable, on the record of Palestine, are met by either side's present peace proposals. As I have tried to suggest, we cannot apply the code of justice in the sense of redemption; nor the code of normal conduct between nation-states. *We must deal with naked fear, and try to allay it.*

On Israel's side, I would hold that the terms she demands for peace would, very substantially, meet her legitimate and proven fears—meet the anxieties of a long-persecuted people who now live in terror of a *jihad* sweeping down on them from Sinai, Judea, and Galilee; of a grenade through the window by night, a land-mine under to-morrow's bus; a blockade that would already have

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strangled a less resourceful people with fewer friends abroad.

But what is there in the record, as the Arabs are bound to interpret it, and in Israel's peace terms, that would give *them* cause for fear?

Let us try to consider the future, as the Arabs are asked to accept it. A territory of 8,048 square miles (the size of Wales) has been granted to a Jewish State whose population now numbers over 1,800,000. That state holds the sovereign right to increase its numbers as it wishes. Its law proclaims the right of every Jew, anywhere, to immigrate and acquire citizenship. Its leaders, pledged under Zionism to Ingather as many Jews from the Diaspora as can be persuaded, or need to come, speak openly of a future population between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000.

In Israel's present area, 4,500,000 citizens would mean a density of 558 per square mile. The population density of England, Scotland, and Wales, with all its massive industrial plant, established trade, and cultivation is 565 per square mile. That of Japan is 625 per square mile. Now this is most certainly only a very partial guide to absorptive capacity. Israel has already proven amazing resourcefulness to economists. Jewish industrial, scientific, commercial, and farming skills are legendary. But are there not, in this prospect of such density, some grounds for neighbouring fear?

I WOULD not suggest for a moment that Israel cannot absorb up to 4,500,000 people; nor am I questioning her leaders' territorial intentions. At risk of monotonous repetition, I must again urge the question *what mode of behaviour her past actions, together with her immigration goals, can reasonably be said to suggest to her neighbours*. Her future density is not the sole criterion; nor even the actual history of her emergence as a nation-state. It is the combination of these factors, with the political record, that gives definite and reasonable grounds for Arab fears; that makes the problem of relations between Israel and her neighbours unique, abnormal, simply not subject to our usual code.

What is the political record? Is it not true that Chaim Weizmann, at the 1921 Zionist Congress, referred to the new Mandate borders of Palestine and TransJordan thus?

"The question concerning the eastern frontier of Palestine has been in part answered. It will be still better answered when Cis-Jordania is so full of Jews that a way is forced into Trans-Jordan." (Had he not already, in 1919, described his hope "that by Jewish immigration, Palestine would ultimately become as Jewish as England is English"?)

It is also true that Mr. Ben-Gurion, in 1931 and again as late as 1946, claimed all Palestine *and TransJordan* for the Jewish National Home. How are Arabs to interpret this, together with the official Jewish acceptance of the 1947 U.N. Partition scheme as the "irreducible minimum"? If we ask them to take Israel's present leadership as pacific and non-expansionist, what kind of response can we honestly expect when a minority party, the Heruth, is allowed to campaign abroad for Israeli possession of the east bank of the River Jordan? Whatever meaning we ourselves may assign to it, what can we reasonably ask the Arabs to think of the visit of Menachem Beigin, the Heruth leader and ex-Irgun terrorist, to France only weeks before the Sinai attack? How often has Mr. Ben-Gurion tried to avoid this kind of Arab inference by specifically and publicly condemning Heruth's pleas, on American platforms, for "only 44,000 square miles" (Israel and Jordan combined)?

I would urge that these kind of facts, taken together with the economic issue of capacity to absorb, and the sheer record of Israel's growth from 80,000 settlers at the time of the Balfour Declaration, do amount to sufficient grounds for an unique kind of fear among her neighbours. I would urge that if all this evidence is then set alongside the militant, world-wide, religio-nationalist character of Zionism, the fear becomes even more understandable. Every Jew, and every Christian of the West who knows anything about Judaism, can appreciate what Mr. Ben-Gurion meant in his statement to the Knesset on 7th November, 1956. But can we ask the Arabs

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to make the same generous interpretation? Israel's forces had reached Mount Sinai. Congratulating them, Mr. Ben-Gurion said, *"You have brought us back to the place where the Law was given, and where we were commanded to be a Chosen People."*

Nothing I am here suggesting is designed to deflect from, or to condone, Arab behaviour in the past eleven years. This is not a polemic for the Arabs, nor some kind of catalogue of Israeli shortcomings. I would ask those who feel their hackles rising to believe this—and to avoid the desire to quote the sufferings of the Jews, the tiny size of Israel relative to the Arab lands, and so on. The spirit of the approach I would urge to the Palestine conflict takes account of, accepts, all these factors. But it questions whether they are, or can reasonably be expected to be, paramount to one or the other side. Let me take, as a most pertinent example, this issue of land area. In the U.N. General Assembly on 18th November, 1955, Israel's brilliant envoy, Mr. Abba Eban, observed:

> "We have great difficulty in understanding why Israel with its 8,000 square miles should be regarded as too big; or why the Arab League states with their 3,000,000 square miles are too small. It seems a highly jaundiced, unchivalrous view.... It will do nobody any harm to leave Israel's 8,000 square miles alone."

The comparison cannot pass without noting that it is highly misleading. Most of that ostensibly vast Arab land area is sheer, *permanent* desert.*

But apart from this, surely Mr. Eban can concede that Israel's neighbours have watched Jewish land occupancy in Palestine grow from 625 square miles in 1944, to 8,000 only five years later? Can he concede no grounds for fear in this spectacle?

However normal a nation-state Israel's citizens and friends think she is, and wish the world at large to believe, Israel's neighbours cannot—*and cannot reasonably be asked to*—see her in the same light. Analogies are always suspect. But in Palestine they are essential, if we are to understand fully what we have done. If, somewhere on the north-western coast of the European Continent, a State has been created with Israel's background, character, and immigration goals, what kind of fears would we deem reasonable among that State's neighbours? More especially, would we demand that they make peace with this new State, accepting its right to unlimited immigration? If we had directly assisted in the birth of that State through a body like the United Nations, would we expect its neighbours to repose confidence in that agency's normal guarantees against expansionism?

I WOULD urge that this, in fact, is the next question: Can we satisfy ourselves that, as U.N. Member-States, the Arab countries should require no guarantees beyond those written into the Charter? The answer, unfortunately, is only too easy. The precise history of the U.N.'s rôle in Palestine renders this normal form of confidence impossible.

Israel's relationship to the U.N. is quite unique. No other state has been given quasi-legal sanction, recognised, and admitted to membership by the U.N. in open denial of local and neighbouring protests and warnings. It will be argued that Israel also has grounds for distrusting the guarantees of the U.N. Charter. But on balance, her tactical reverses at the U.N. since 1947 surely do not outweigh the overwhelming fact that she *exists* by virtue of that body's decisions. U.N. majorities have criticised and/or condemned every form of Arab hostility towards Israel since 1947. There is nothing in the whole U.N. record giving the faintest suggestion that its members would permit an Arab attempt to eliminate the State of Israel. There is, however, much more than a suggestion, from the Arab viewpoint, that the U.N. might be less than consistent towards their security in its Charter interpretations. The

* Those 3,000,000 square miles, for example, include Egypt's 386,000, only 13,000 of which can ever be cultivated. They include Libya's 700,000 square miles of 85 per cent. non-arable land. When the dyke-fed "granaries of Rome" are restored in Libya, they will embrace only 700 square miles. The idea that if the Arabs "tried," they could turn the whole Middle East into a fertile garden is among our many absurd illusions.

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1947 Partition Resolution, by itself, has put the U.N. beyond impartiality in Arab eyes. For this reason, alone, they can never place their full confidence in the Charter or, indeed, in the Western Powers (Russia, of course, is now mitigating her original stigma of having recognised Israel only hours after America did so.)

It will be argued that the Sinai–Suez episode, if nothing else, should give the Arabs all the assurances they are entitled to demand of the U.N. *vis-à-vis* Israel. But anyone who was in the Arab world at the time will know that, grateful and relieved though they were for the U.N.'s decision, they attribute it to the special character of that crisis—to Moscow's warning, to American anger over the duplicity of her Atlantic allies, and to distaste about collusion. The Arabs are not disposed to presume that on all future occasions the same fortunate circumstances would apply, and would so move the U.N. Nor do I believe that, on the record, we can expect them to be so disposed. Nothing that happened during the Sinai–Suez crisis can remove their original resentment of the way in which, as they see it, fundamental provisions of the U.N. Charter were tossed aside by the General Assembly in 1947.

So profound is their memory of this experience, so acute their sense of inferiority against the global influence of Zionism, that not even Mr. Eisenhower's prompt denunciation of Israel on the eve of a Presidential election could change their view. We may think this is ingrate in the extreme. But consider what followed. The Arabs watched the whole attitude of the West, and of the United States, perform an apparent *volte-face* between 29th October, 1956, and the New Year of 1957. They saw two Great Powers compelled to withdraw from Egypt very promptly and despite protest. But they watched Israel, ostensibly a tiny nation, being allowed to prolong her occupation of Sinai for another three months, while Western opinion seemed transformed from condemnation of an aggressor to near-sympathy for a victim. Over this whole period I watched such new hopes in the U.N. as had been raised slowly but surely extinguished in the minds of the Arabs, who relapsed into their old obsession.

I USE the word "obsession" quite deliberately, because that is, by now, the mental condition of the Arab States over Palestine. It is exasperating in the extreme. But exasperation will not help us cure it. Somehow, however herculean the strain on our patience as we view Palestine from afar, we must now begin to study the Arab mentality, quite as much as the Jewish mentality. Few of us, for example, were disposed to place any credence in Abdul Nasser's claim that his régime decided to buy modern weapons, from whatever source, only after the Israeli attack on Gaza in early 1955. Later that year, most of us scoffed at Nasser's reference, in an interview, to the fact that he had been reading for years, *in Western journals*, that Israel could defeat any or all of the Arab League States. But is this not a fact? Have we not, in the West, repeatedly predicted that Israel could trounce the Arabs again? Have we not sneered openly at Arab fighting prowess; and then howled murder when the Arabs have sought to improve that prowess? *Even after Sinai?*

Once again I must repeat: everything I have noted is most certainly "from their point of view." Much can be said, and has more often been said, on the other side —about Arab provocation, in this immediate context. But we are here discussing Arab confidence, against the actual record as they are bound to interpret it, in the United Nations and its Western members as a safeguard for them. And I would suggest that when all the evidence is assembled on both sides—ignoring no single facet of Israel's grievances—the Arabs do have a special claim on the U.N. I would most strongly urge another look at the words of Count Bernadotte, the ill-fated U.N. mediator, in 1948. In his Progress Report at Rhodes (Cmd. 7530), he observed:

"The Arabs harbour grave fears that a Jewish State in Palestine will not stay within its defined boundaries; and that, through population

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pressure resulting from unlimited immigration, encouragement and support from world Jewry, and burgeoning nationalism, a threat will be posed not only to Palestine but to the entire Arab Near East. *A tolerant approach can appreciate the Arab views and fears, although on appraisal they may in large measure be found extravagant and unfounded. But since the Arabs nurture such viewpoints, no settlement can be on solid foundations unless every reasonable reassurance possible is afforded them, not only by the Jewish State, but by the U.N.*"

The italics are mine, and they sum up what, in my view, the world has perilously neglected all through the years since Bernadotte was killed. He had already asked Israel's Foreign Minister, in July, 1948, to accept that "the question of immigration into Palestine must be considered within the context of the total problem. Palestine, from this point of view, has become the object of international concern. It would therefore seem justifiable that the U.N. Economic and Social Council might be given an eventual say in the matter.... It cannot be ignored that immigration affects not only the Jewish State and the Jewish people, but the surrounding Arab world." I place no particular, hallowed value on Count Bernadotte's views. His final, compromise proposals as mediator (the Bernadotte Report that incited his murder) were not joyfully seized by the Arabs. But even after all his discussions, that Report still contained at its core the question of immigration, and whether, in the unique case of the new Jewish State, the normal sovereign right should not be modified. I would hold that, in these respects, his judgments are as urgent and applicable to-day as they were in 1948. Nothing has changed their validity. Everything that has happened since then has reinforced them. In 1957, one of the most prominent of Arab statesmen, himself a socialist, said to me:

"You ask me to accept Israel's existence, just as I accept, say, India's existence. Obviously a State is there, with 1,800,000 people. But is that Israel? Is it that State, with that population—or anything up to the 10,000,000 Jews in the world? Yes, you will laugh and say that is absurd. You would have said the same in 1920, when there were less than 100,000 Jews, and no Jewish State, in Palestine; yet look what happened. Can you expect us to say it is absurd to-day?

"I want to know what I am dealing with before I negotiate, and so would you. Everything the Zionists have done, everything they have said, warns me that this present State is only the beginning. It is not a normal State that you ask us to accept so easily—not on its record, not on its proclaimed goals. Can you people in the West never put yourselves in our shoes—as well as those of the Jews Hitler massacred?"

Is all this bluff and mere clever talk? Cannot a tolerant approach appreciate these views and fears, even if they may "in large measure be found extravagant and unfounded"? The "reasonable reassurances" of which Bernadotte spoke have never been offered since 1948 to test the question. If Israel could now reconsider them, we might make a slow, terribly slow, but utterly vital start towards peace in the Holy Land. I am not suggesting an Arab veto over Israel's immigration programme. I am suggesting that Israel should now be ready to allow impartial international judgment of her absorptive capacity.

An expert body, under the United Nations, could be set up whereon Israel would be assured of every sympathetic consideration, and of stern treatment of any unreasonable Arab protest. The Arabs, for their part, would know that the U.N. was concretely guarding against their dominant fear *at the source*—before it could possibly become an impulse to expansionism. A condition of this scheme would be that the Arab States concerned take immediate steps to implement, with Israel, the plans for regional irrigation and power development that have been ready in blueprint form for so long. Israel would thus be assured that every possible step was being taken to enable her to absorb immigrants at a reasonable rate.

I know of no other key to the Palestine impasse as it now stands. I know of no other way whereby the Arabs will be persuaded to accept Israel in their midst, and live with her in peace. I do not recommend this move as a certain panacea. Indeed, it will immediately

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be pointed out that the record of Arab policy, even before the 1947 Partition Resolution, gives little hope that this proposal would unlock the impasse. Jamal Husseini did indeed tell the General Assembly in September of that year that Arab policy was based on three no's: no to partition, no to further Jewish immigration, no to Jewish Statehood. But the Arab States have since committed themselves, in principle, to the 1947 Partition Resolution, which did specifically envisage Jewish Statehood. I would suggest that it is on the factor of immigration, and not of territory, that a *via media* must now be sought.

The price of this "key" for Israel is, to be sure, enormous, and quite without precedent. No other nation-state has been asked to agree to external judgment as to its population levels. There is, too, the special religious significance of immigration, of *Aliya*, for Zionism. But Israel's entire history is without precedent. In granting Statehood to the Jews of Palestine, the community of nations broke many exalted principles and many precedents. And in one short decade Israel has consolidated and developed its home for world Jewry in a manner deserving of the great admiration. Surely this concession is not too much to ask in return—for the sake of every Jew now in Israel as much as for Arab, or Christian, or all other human beings so intimately and so perilously concerned throughout the world?

SUCH a decision would involve the rest of us in responsibilities we were not all prepared to accept in the early post-war years, when the humanitarian pretensions of the Western world were confronted by Europe's Jewish D.P.'s. There would have to be a readiness, on record in advance, to admit into our midst any possible wave of Russian or East European Jewish refugees whom Israel could not reasonably be deemed able to absorb. I think it is worth recalling, at this point, that Palestine was not the first, spontaneous choice of all the survivors of Hitler's ghastly genocide. But it became the only salvation of many, as door after door was closed to them elsewhere. The "Palestine band-wagon" of the years 1944–48 is among the most shameful, most cynical episodes in the Western world's long and sordid treatment of Jews. How many of us remember Pakistan's Zafrullah Khan, speaking in the U.N. Assembly during the Partition debate, and sardonically referring to the reluctance of members to absorb Europe's Jewish refugees?

> "Australia, an overpopulated small country with congested areas says no, no, no; Canada, equally congested and overpopulated, says no; the United States, a great humanitarian country, a small area with small resources, says no. This is their contribution to the humanitarian principle. But they state: let them go into Palestine, where there are *vast* areas, a large economy, and no trouble at all; they can easily be taken in there."

I would hold that world Jewry would be entitled to firm assurances that there would be no more closed doors if Israel were to accept phased limitation of immigrants. Even if Jewish leaders did not make this demand, it should be explicitly met. I say this because there were those among Zionist organisers who showed very little real distress that Jewish D.P.s were compelled to choose Palestine. Morris Ernst, the distinguished American lawyer and close friend of President Roosevelt, has recorded how Roosevelt's effort to arrange a world-wide immigration "budget" for Europe's D.P.s was virtually sabotaged by Zionist pressure. Ernst himself found everywhere "a deep, genuine, often fanatically emotional vested interest in putting over the Palestine movement."

To recall these unhappy facts now is not to rake over old coals. It is of the utmost importance in considering any possible limitation of Israel's immigration programme. Jewish leaders have been predicting a possible wave of refugees from Soviet anti-Semitism for several years. They would be perfectly justified, on the face of it, to ask what assurances there would be that such new refugees would find haven elsewhere. But the world as a whole would be equally justified in making sure that another humanitarian wave of feeling will not be exploited by the kind of fanaticism that made one President

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of the Zionist Organisation of America declare publicly:

"Were there no displaced Jews in Europe, and were there free opportunities for Jewish immigration in other parts of the world at this time, Zionism would still be an imperative necessity."

I am compelled to add that it is precisely this sort of fanaticism that has increased Arab bitterness even beyond issues of self-determination and "intrusion" in Palestine. They have watched the imposition of a whole new community, and a new State, in Palestine under a surge of international humanitarianism when, in fact, many of those who made themselves spokesmen for Jewish suffering were motivated by entirely different values.

RECOGNITION in practical diplomacy that Jewish immigration is still at the very heart of the Palestine conflict would not end the nightmare in short order. It would take time, and most certainly unpublicised discussions, to slow down the momentum of propaganda, crises, and the hatred that now makes it increasingly difficult for any Arab leader to preach conciliation and stay in office, or even alive. I should like to outline what first steps I believe might, in time, create the atmosphere of conciliation that is essential to any real progress towards peace in the Holy Land.

1. A request by Israel herself to the U.N. General Assembly to appoint a commission of economists and social welfare experts whose judgment of Israel's absorptive capacity the Jewish State will accept as from a given date.

This body should be composed of citizens of countries whom each side can accept as reasonably impartial, with at least one Arab and one Israeli representative.

The mandate of this Commission, resolved by the Assembly, should contain in its preamble an open declaration to the Arab States recognising, without prejudice, their fears of continued unlimited Jewish immigration; noting that Israel has offered to submit her population goals to international judgment as an earnest of peaceful intentions; and calling on the Arab States to respond by immediate, practical gestures to the people of Israel.

2. The General Assembly should pass a concurrent resolution calling on Member-States outside the Middle East to register with the Secretary-General, by the date of Israel's acceptance of the Commission's judgment, specific affirmations of willingness to admit reasonable quotas of Jewish refugees from any future persecution. Specifically, the Governments of the United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Brazil should be urged to make such affirmation.

A standing fund should be established, under the control of the Secretary-General, to assist in such resettlement should it at any time become necessary.

3. The Arab States should agree that, within one year of Israel's acceptance of the Commission's judgment, they will implement, with Israel, the scheme for the integrated development of the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers through a Commission responsible to the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

4. The Arab States and Israel should meet, under the auspices of a team of three Arbitrators, to begin negotiations for peace treaties. The date of this first meeting should be not later than one year from the date of the Immigration Commission's assumption of responsibility.

The following steps should be taken not later than six months prior to the first meeting, and without prejudice to the negotiations:

(*a*) U.N.E.F.: Israel to accept a quota of U.N.E.F. troops on her side of the Armistice Line with Egypt. Both sides to reaffirm to the U.N. Secretary-General their acceptance of all the Armistice Agreements and subsequent Truce provisions, and their co-operation with the U.N. Truce Supervision officers.

(*b*) Iraq and Jordan to register with the Secretary-General a pledge that Iraqi armed forces shall not cross the River Jordan without prior notification of 24 hours to the U.N. Security Council.

(*c*) Egypt and Syria, in the United Arab Republic, to register a pledge that, as of six months prior to the first meetings with Israel, no further weapons shall be purchased or imported under prior purchase.

(*d*) All Arab States concerned to accept a standstill as of the same date on armaments imports from whatever source, and regardless of stated purpose; this standstill pledge to be subject to monthly reports to the Secretary-General by a Commission of neutral countries acceptable to the Arab States.

(*e*) Israel to make the same standstill pledge, under similar report conditions.

(*f*) Propaganda: the U.N. General Assembly to request a report, by a neutral Observer Group, of all radio bulletins and broadcasts transmitted in the Middle East as of six months before the first Arab–Israeli meeting. The Assembly will

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pay particular attention to the question whether Arab broadcasts have fully and accurately presented both Israel's voluntary submission of her immigration programme to the Commission, and the Assembly's own Mandate to that Commission.

This Observer Group will also report to the Assembly on monitored broadcasts to the Middle East from outside: *viz.*, from Moscow and from the Cyprus station sometimes known as *Sharq al-Adna.*

Now I will be the first to admit that the above schedule, set against the present tensions and intransigent actions of the Middle East, may seem utterly visionary. I would expect an immediate protest from Israel over any suggestion of limiting her right of immigration; and quite possibly an Arab denial that such a move would meet their demands. I am not arrogantly proposing a "Peace Plan," but rather outlining what would seem to be the essential elements, and their rough priority, for any progress towards a settlement in the Holy Land. It may well be felt, even by those who would agree with the definition of the problem I have sought to make, that Israel cannot be asked to offer limited immigration "out of the blue." I suggest this only because I am certain that the impact of such an Israeli overture, touching and allaying the classic Arab fear, would be enormous throughout the Arab world. But if this method is out of the question, then let it be through diplomatic channels instead.

Now if there is realistic merit in this definition of the problem, what *kind* of peace settlement might emerge? The two other key issues would be territory and refugees. Jewish Statehood not only cannot be an issue but, I feel certain, the Arabs would no longer make it an issue if the critical facet of that Statehood—the immigration right—were to be modified, together with provision of the other, normal guarantees against expansionism. This is, to be sure, a most sweeping assertion. I can only add to it that it must be tested by actual diplomacy. The situation, to my mind, is not unlike that described by Mr. Kennan in his Reith comments on the rôle of Germany in East-West negotiations. Observing that Moscow has been given no reason to suppose that Western forces would under any circumstances be withdrawn from the major portion of Germany, he said: "Until we stop pushing the Kremlin against a closed door, we shall never learn whether it would be prepared to go through an open one." If I may be allowed to paraphrase: "Until we stop pushing the Arabs against a closed door, we shall never learn whether they would be prepared to go through an open one. Since 1947, they have never been given any reason to suppose that, under any circumstances, the world would be willing to give them the special, concrete reassurances against Israeli expansionism which alone, in their view, might make it safe to accept Israel's existence in their midst."

What about territory, then? Without wishing to sound dramatically abstruse, I would say, from discussions in confidence with key Arab statesmen last year, that the territorial issues they would bring to the conference table would not, in fact, involve Israel's surrender of all land outside the original 1947 Jewish Partition area. By no coincidence, the focal point of interest of both sides is the Negev: and I should like briefly to explain why before considering any possible territorial settlement.

The Negev is that triangle of land whose apex lies at the Gulf of Aqaba in the south. It widens out to Gaza in the north-west, the Dead Sea shore in the north-east. Israel's interest in it is two-fold: economic and strategic. The Negev, properly irrigated, offers great prospect of cultivation and settlement, and it contains many valuable minerals. Possession of the Negev area is also vital to Israel's development and use of her port of Elath, in the Gulf of Aqaba—the only maritime outlet she possesses south of the Suez Canal.

The Arabs have one classical interest in this triangle, an interest so important, politically and commercially, that the U.N. Partition Resolution's allotment of the Negev to the Jews was a major blow. Only across the Negev can the historic land connection between Egypt (and Arab points west of the Nile) and the great "Fertile Crescent" be

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maintained. When the Arabs have spoken of Israel as "a wedge driven into our heart," they have been speaking, territorially, of this triangle. It was for this reason that Count Bernadotte's Compromise Proposal sought to return the Negev to the Arabs. So paramount was it in Jewish thinking, however, that he was murdered by terrorists.

The second Arab interest in the Negev is more recent, and I should not like to say more than that I know quite specifically that it is a diplomatic possibility worth exploring. This interest is that at least a proportion of Palestine's 930,000 Arab refugees could be resettled in this triangle, with irrigation water piped down to it from rivers to the north—the Yarkon (already tapped by Israel) and the Jordan.

We thus see that two sets of identical interests focus on the Negev: for both sides, it is deemed vital for land and commercial communications; for both, it has possibilities of cultivation to absorb peoples. The present position, in so far as peace terms are concerned, is that Israel would try to meet the Arab communications need by granting a land corridor to them across the Negev. I would hold, however, that there is another possibility of the utmost potential importance in any peace negotiations: one that might ultimately prove a second "key" to the whole impasse.

I have already outlined what I would consider to be one reciprocal condition for Israel's voluntary limitation on her immigration goals: namely, Arab agreement to implement the long-standing regional irrigation and cultivation scheme for the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers, designed to benefit both Jordan and Israel. I would now suggest the following directly associated scheme:

1. The Negev area to be declared, in treaty, a demilitarised zone, in which full freedom of transit would be afforded to the citizens, goods, and transport units of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia (and through those Arab States, other countries of the Middle East).

2. The Negev to be detached in law from the sovereignties of all contiguous States, and to be administered as a Joint Territory by a Council representing Israel, Egypt, and Jordan, with several neutral-nation members and a U.N.-designed Chairman or Governor. (Alternatively, the local membership could simply be comprised of Israel and a representative of the Arab League.)

3. All Jewish settlements and settlers now in the Negev, and all Jewish investment so far made in the area, to be guaranteed inviolate and without hindrance in relationship to Israel.

4. An agreed proportion of Palestine's Arab refugees to be offered resettlement in the Negev, with financial assistance through the United Nations, including such compensation as is already due them.

5. All further immigration into, and investment in, the area to be subject to decision by the administering Council, and to review by the U.N. Economic and Social Council, which is responsible to the General Assembly.

6. Elath to be declared a free port for Israel as a direct reciprocal condition for Israel's long-standing offer of Haifa as a free port for Jordan.

7. Rapid development of the Negev Territory to be undertaken by the same Authority that would be responsible for the Jordan Valley scheme, with financial and technical assistance through the United Nations.

It will be seen that this overall proposal would meet the communications interests of both Arab States and Israel. But would it prejudice Israel's economic and social development? The Negev is now Mr. Ben-Gurion's dream—he has spoken of 500,000 Jews living there one day. Any suggestion of detaching this triangle from Israel proper may outrage Israelis. But I would urge that joint usage, as I have outlined, would not rob Israel of her successes so far in the Negev. The 15,000 Jews now settled there would remain: the land opened up, the mineral resources found, would still serve Israel. And under U.N. auspices, further development and settlement, far from being prohibited, would be actively encouraged.

The vital difference would be that here, in this almost virgin zone, Arab and Jew could be brought together *in precisely that kind of integration that is, ultimately, Israel's only hope of normalcy in the Middle East.* At the same time, at least a proportion of the Arab refugees would find new and inspiring livelihoods.

On this last point, it must be stressed that, politically and psychologically, there

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would be enormous difference between demanding that Palestine's exiles now in Jordan and Gaza move bodily out of the area (*i.e.*, to Syria and Iraq), and asking that they accept resettlement in an area that was, in fact, part of the territory the Arabs feel was usurped.

I DOUBT that all of Gaza's and Jordan's 730,000 refugees could be resettled in the Negev, or should be, if the idea of joint Arab–Jewish settlement is to be preserved. But there are certain grounds for thinking that, both with the refugees themselves, and with the Arab Governments who champion their cause, the rôle of such a Negev scheme would be extremely important, politically. It could, in fact, be the third "key" to unlock the Palestine impasse.*

But I should like to emphasise that, in the matter of the 930,000 Arab refugees, it is facile and foolish to hold that the Arab Governments are simply "using them as a political weapon." It is, indeed, easy to understand how this view has gained such currency. There *has* been some Arab obstruction of U.N.R.W.A., the U.N. Relief Agency for the refugees; the Arab States' contributions to U.N.R.W.A.'s funds are indeed small. It can most certainly be held that, had the Arabs, both in Palestine and around it, offered no violent resistance whatever to the creation of a Jewish State, there might not to-day be any refugees. But like everything else about Palestine, the exact record is a confused one that admits of no easy moralising about either side's actions in respect of this enormous tragedy.

One would like to hope that the kind of approach to peace I have outlined would not require further argument about the origins of the refugee, any more than the overall, problem. But it is, after all, a prime political factor in the whole dispute; and the accumulation of ten years' deliberate and accidental fallacy about it help to keep the atmosphere about Palestine at white heat. It seems therefore essential to clear up at least a few of the errors before concluding this analysis.

It has been argued for years that, not only did the Arab States cause the Arab exodus by their violence as such; they exhorted Arab villagers and townsfolk to move aside until the Jews had been exterminated from the land. It is frequently alleged that these exhortations, during the Arab invasion of the new Israeli State, were the prime cause of the exodus. The facts on record are quite different. The Arab exodus began well before the surrounding Arab States invaded new Israel on 15th May, 1948. In the period of bitter "civil war" that raged over Palestine from the passing of the U.N. Partition Resolution on 29th November, 1947, centre after centre of Arab population was seized by, or surrendered to, the Jewish forces. For example, between 17th April and 13th May, 1948, the towns of Tiberias, Haifa, Safed, and Jaffa—all within the Jewish Partition area —were taken. From them alone, some 180,000 Arabs fled. By 14th May, 1948, the eve of the proclamation of Israel and of the Arab invasion of that State, some 300,000 Arabs were already refugees.

WHY did they flee? Without question, there were Arab exhortations. But was this the sole cause of such a huge exodus? Not even Jewish evidence suggests this. Mr. Meyer Levin, writing in *Jerusalem Embattled*, refers to Haganah loudspeakers touring the city and calling out, in Arabic, "The road to Jericho is still open! Fly from Jerusalem before you are all killed!" Arthur Koestler, in *Promise and Fulfilment*, cites the Arab defeats at Mishmar, Ha'emak (5th April), Castel, and Deir Yassin (both on 9th April), and the imminent departure of

* In proposing this third *via media*, I should make it clear that it has no source—or none of which I am aware—in any official Arab quarters. If I have shown reluctance to indicate the precise sources of information that lead me to mention general Arab interest in the Negev for refugee resettlement, it is because nothing should be said by outsiders that might cause political embarrassment in so delicate a matter. But the idea of the Negev as a Joint Territory is solely the result of personal study, of deduction from certain Arab confidences, and of discussion with purely private, but eminent, Middle Eastern observers. It would, in any case, be arrogant in the extreme to do more than offer it as a contribution to public and diplomatic thinking on the Arab–Israeli problem.

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British troops, as starting "a sudden, panicky flight of the Arab population all over the mixed territories of Palestine":

"It had the character of a landslide. The psychologically decisive factor in this spectacular exodus was... the bloodbath of Deir Yassin."

That bloodbath—which, let us be fair, was only one of innumerable atrocities committed by *both* sides—is recalled by Menachem Beigin, the Irgun leader, in exactly the same terms. In *Revolt*, he refers to "the maddened, uncontrollable stampede of 635,000 Arabs" following panic rumours of Irgun massacres. ("The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be overestimated.")

Count Bernadotte's report put it in these terms:

"The exodus of Palestine Arabs resulted from panic created by fighting in their communities, by rumours concerning real or alleged acts of terrorism, or expulsion."

Finally, the first official *Israeli* statement about the refugees bears mention. Mr. Moshe Sharett, the Foreign Minister, wrote to Bernadotte in August, 1948, and referred to "a mass exodus, *mostly spontaneous*" (my italics). One would have thought that, if Arab exhortations were the prime cause, Israel would have staked this claim at the earliest possible opportunity. Yet Mr. Sharett's letter makes no mention whatsoever of such a cause. On the contrary, he describes the tragedy in precisely the terms which historians will surely use:

"The Palestine Arab exodus of 1948 is one of those cataclysmic phenomena which, according to the experience of other countries, change the course of history."

Other parts of this vital document, however, merit quotation because they are still part of the whole refugee controversy. Mr. Shertok, speaking for Israel, claimed that "but for the intervention of the Arab States, there would have been an overwhelming measure of local Arab acquiescence in the establishment of the State of Israel." I would say that the most charitable possible judgment of the record of Palestine Arab hostility through all the years up to mid-1948 brings this assertion into open question. But if we are to try to understand the Arab mentality, as it is affected by the refugee issue, we must also consider that, as early as August, 1948, Israel was claiming that these refugees, who had fled their homes *only months, in some instances weeks, before, could not possibly be re-admitted to the Jewish area.* Mr. Sharett told Count Bernadotte:

"On the economic side, the reintegration of the returning Arabs into normal life, and even their mere maintenance, would present an insuperable problem. The difficulties of accommodation, employment, and ordinary livelihood would be insuperable."

On realistic security grounds, Israel's refusal to re-admit an enormous potential fifth column could then, and can to-day, be readily appreciated. It is when the question of *economic absorptive capacity* is raised; when it was raised by Israel so very early in her Statehood; that Arab suspicions are reinforced. Is it not an easy (even if not necessarily correct) corollary that if Israel could not absorb Arabs, she could not absorb Jews? What had happened in those few months of 1948 that made the return of Palestine's Arabs to their established homes, fields, shops, and jobs such an "insuperable problem"? If the answer is that thousands upon thousands of new Jewish immigrants had entered the new Jewish State, is it not an easy (even if not necessarily correct) suspicion that *if there had been no Arab exodus, those Jewish immigrants would have presented an "insuperable problem"?*

This kind of suspicion is still current to-day, when Arabs see that one of the prime pro-Israeli arguments against the U.N.'s 1948 resolution for a choice of repatriation or resettlement is precisely the same. If, they ask, Israel cannot economically absorb these 930,000 Arabs within her present confines, how does she propose to absorb nearly six times that number of Jews in the next few years? I would sincerely urge all friends of Israel not to use this economic argument against repatriation. The security argument

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is infinitely better, and one that realistic Arabs can indeed understand.

In conclusion then, as regards the refugees, I would hold that for them, as for other Arabs and the Jews of Israel, the story is one of tragic multiple responsibility—of what Koestler has called Palestine's "hopeless jumble of polemic." Nothing is simple, nothing clear-cut. If we are to hold the Arabs totally responsible for the refugees' misery, we must be prepared to assert, quite unequivocally, that the whole history of Palestine, right up to and beyond the U.N.'s Partition resolution, is one of justice and reasonable treatment of the Arabs. We must be prepared to say that it was treatment of the kind we would mete out to any other peoples, anywhere (and most particularly, anywhere in the West) in similar circumstances; treatment we would not consider could justifiably be met by violence. If we are to continue claiming that the Arab States could end the plight of these kinsfolk to-morrow, then we arrogate to ourselves the judgment that the 930,000 are the *unwilling victims* of Arab "intransigence."

I do wish that those writers who so often make these assertions would occasionally support them. I am afraid that the phrase "the Arabs are just cynically using the refugees" is another glib comment, made from a comfortable distance, along with the routine one mentioned earlier ("The Arabs must accept Israel's existence"). On what information do those who make this assertion base their judgment? Can they produce any evidence, from any reliable and impartial source that has been in close and constant contact with the refugees? Can they show, quite clearly, that the refugees would joyfully enter trucks and trains to go to resettlement areas if the Arab Governments agreed to-morrow? Even assuming the cumulative rôle of propaganda in the camps, was there at any time since 1948 a point at which, *on evidence*, the refugees would have willingly done so?

And if they would not willingly have done so, then no one, surely, is entitled to invoke humanitarianism against the Arab Governments. I do not absolve those régimes from all failure to look after these unfortunate people. But it should be remembered that this community of exiles has lived, since 1950, as wards of the United Nations, which is pledged to a *choice* between repatriation or compensation. Over 300,000 of them live almost within sight of their former homes and lands; in some instances can hear their own irrigation pumps working on the other side of the Armistice Line. They, and the Arab States, regard the United Nations as responsible for their welfare, their future and, because it is on record on the subject, their redemption. I would suggest that before we can place the entire burden of responsibility on the Arab States, we had better, at the least, have the General Assembly rescind Resolution 194.

No, it will not be easy, even with full Arab governmental compliance, to persuade these people to abandon all claim to their former homes, and accept compensation with resettlement. I would say without hesitation that if, by some miracle, every Arab host country accepted resettlement to-morrow, they would have to move refugees *at gunpoint*. I believe they *can* be resettled, in time, and in an atmosphere in which all Arabs see evidence that the U.N. recognises their grievance and their continuing fear. It is in search of that atmosphere that I have suggested the concrete steps already outlined.

How, then, can we summarise this search for peace in the Holy Land? I should like to repeat the fundamental premises on which such peace—indeed peace at all—can be based.

1. The Palestine conflict is utterly and perilously dynamic, no matter how it ebbs and flows on our front pages. It is static only in respect of the total impasse between the two sides' peace terms, as they now stand.

2. The passage of *time* has not, on evidence, produced any greater willingness to compromise between these peace terms. The policy of attrition, which is now practised by both sides, is manifestly sterile and dangerous.

3. Peace, on either side's terms, cannot be externally *imposed* on the Holy Land. The steps

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required to impose an effective peace are simply impossible.

4. Despite their propaganda, I believe that the Arab States can be brought to accept the existence of a Jewish State in their midst, provided their one central, overwhelming, and historically consistent fear is both recognised and allayed in the terms of such acceptance.

5. That fear is of mass Jewish immigration into a tiny area of land leading to expansionism —to *further* expansionism, as the Arabs are bound to view it. It is time to study this obsession, however exasperating.

6. This fear, however unfounded it may be in fact, is eminently justified and *reasonable* in the unique circumstances of Israel's creation. In similar historical circumstances elsewhere, we would expect such fear and expect the demand for unique, prior reassurances against it.

7. The fear can be allayed, and without basic prejudice to the National Home which the Jews of the world, with our help, have now established in the Holy Land.

8. The concession that Israel must make is indeed unique and unprecedented. But the history of Palestine is unique; no yardstick of justice, or of normal conduct between nation-states, can realistically be applied to it. We must seek justice *now*, whatever the tragic past. In this, the only moral frame of reference, the concession required of Israel is surely a legitimate and reasonable one.

I should like to hope that, however distressed friends of Israel may be by my analysis and recommendations, they will not accuse me of anti-Semitism or blind emotional bias. No one with a spark of decency can consider the story of world Jewry, and its present chapter in Israel, without the most profound sorrow for every Jew who still finds his or her haven in jeopardy. My hope is quite as much to find security for that haven as to rid the Arab world of its cancerous obsession, the grievance that is warping and twisting 40,000,000 human beings at a critical stage in their own evolution. I would urge with all my heart that we must begin by an appreciation which Arthur Koestler has set in the most succinct possible terms:

> "In the Balfour Declaration, one nation solemnly promised to a second nation the country of a third. No second thoughts can diminish the originality of this procedure. The Arabs had been living there for centuries, and the country was no doubt theirs in the generally accepted sense of the word. It is true that the Arabs had vast underpopulated territories at their disposal and the Jews had none; that the Arabs were a backward, the Jews a forward people; and that the latter claimed to have received that country only three thousand years earlier from God himself, who had only temporarily withdrawn it from them.
>
> But arguments of this nature had never before in history induced an act of State of a comparable kind."

From this act of State all else has flowed, so inexorably that it is almost heart-breaking to read to-day the dire prophecies of Palestine's future even at the earliest stages of Jewish colonisation. I know of no other history that so readily admits of a mystic atmosphere of doom. There is enough irony in the Holy Land to serve every historian of humanity for the next hundred years.

We must now try again to defy the doom, and confound the irony.

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Christopher Logue

From Book XXI of Homer's Iliad

PRELUDE

As they retreated towards the river Scamander, Achilles split the Trojan army: one half, chased back along the same lines the Greeks had taken yesterday when Hector split their front, ran over the fields towards Troy; the other half were sealed into a loop made by the Scamander.

Jammed close, these miserable troops slithered down the bank into deep water, screaming as they twisted away from each other, their weapons tangled up, hands snatching at chin-straps as the cross currents sucked them out.

Imagine swarming locusts driven onto a river by fire: the running flame licks at their armoured skins, singeing them, and, as it huddles against the water, the swarm is scorched. Likewise Scamander filled with Trojans.

Into this confusion Achilles waded, hacking amongst the wretched mass till his arms went numb and the Scamander ran like the gutter set in the floor of a slaughterhouse. Up to this time the river had not taken sides; now, soiled by a Greek, Scamander (basing his thought on private grievance) began contriving ways to help the Trojans.

Such plans might well have come to nothing. But, while the river thought, Achilles speared Asteropaeus—grandson of the river Axius—scooping in the man's belly till his vitals floated out like mauve welts along Scamander's bank. And after this, Achilles stripped his victim, stood on his chest and said:

184: From a duck's egg, a duck. Doubtless, his relative Scamander
Will cleanse this dead, wet, wreck of an obstinate man.
A River king came in his mother's mother's slit. And proud of it,
He went for me, the one plain King's grandchild, and got killed.
But the axioms commemorating divine peerage, state:
Children from Heaven's one plain King—like me, deadman—
Match above any River's boy exactly as
Above the world's rivers combined at their spring estuaries,
Stands Heaven, stands in Heaven, God.
Consider the Scamander, here. A fine example for any River.
A big River. Surely Scamander would have, if he could have,
Took your part? Ach . . . I hunt a hare with a drum.
Such opposites mock competition, yes, the Freshwater King,
Achelous, plus five wide oceans, plus, O—
Plus the whole damp lot, are good as dead
Faced with God's warning thunder."

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Then Achilles,
Leaving the tall enemy with eels at his white fat
And his tender kidneys infested with nibblers,
Pulled his spear out of the mud and waded off,
After the deadman's troop that beat upstream
For their dead lives; then, glimpsing Achilles' scarlet plume
Amongst the clubbed bullrushes, they ran and as they ran
The Greek got seven of them, swerved, eyeing his eighth, and
Ducked at him as Scamander bunched his sinews up,
And up, and further up, and further further still, until
A glistening stack of water, solid, white with sunlight,
Swayed like a giant bone over the circling humans,
Shuddered, and changed for speaking's sake into humanity.
And the stack of water was his chest; and the foaming
Head of it, his bearded face; and the roar of it—
Like weir-water—Scamander's voice:

"Indeed, Greek, with Heaven helping out, you work
Miraculous atrocities. Still, if God's Son
Has settled every Trojan head on you,
Why make my precincts the scupper for your dead inheritance?
Do them in the fields, Greek, or—or do them anywhere but here.
Thickened with carcasses my waters stiffen in a putrid syrup,
Downstream, the mouth cakes against standing blood-clots yet,
And yet, you massacre. Come, Greek, quit this loathsome rapture!"
Head back, Achilles cried:
"Good, River, good . . . and you shall have your way . . . but presently.
When every living Trojan squats inside his city's wall.
When I have done with Hector, Hector with me, to death."

And he bayed and leapt—
Bronze flame shattering like a divine beast—
Pity the Trojans!
And Scamander
Tried involving Lord Apollo:
"Lord, why the negligence?
Is this the way to keep your Father's word?
Time and again he said: Watch the Trojan flank
Till sundown comes, winds drop, shadows mix and lengthen,
War closes down for night, and nobody is out
Bar dogs and sentries."
Hearing this,
The Greek jumped clear into the water, and Scamander
Went for him in hatred: curved back his undertow, and
Hunched like a snarling yellow bull drove the dead up,
And out, tossed by the water's snout onto the fields;
Yet those who lived he hid behind a gentle wave.
Around the Greek Scamander deepened. Wave clambered
Over wave to get at him, beating aside his studded shield so,

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Both footholds gone, half toppled over by the bloodstained crud,
Achilles snatched for balance at an elm, Ah, its roots gave,
Wrenched out, splitting the bank, and tree and all
Crashed square across the river, leaves, splintered branches,
And dead birds blocking the fall. And Achilles wanted out.
Scrambled through the root's lopsided crown, out of the ditch,
Off home.

But the river Scamander had not done with him.
Forcing its bank, an avid lip of water slid
After him, to smother his Greek breath for Trojan victory.
Aoi!—but that Greek could run!—and put and kept
A spearthrow's lead between him and the quick,
Suck, quick, curve of the oncoming water,
Arms outstretched as if to haul himself along the air,
His shield—like the early moon—thudding against
His nape-neck and his arse, fast, fast
As the black winged hawk's full stoop he went—
And what is faster?—yet, Scamander was near on him,
Its hood of seething water poised over his shoulderblades.
Achilles was a quick man, yes, but the Gods are quicker than men.
And easily Scamander's webbed claw stroked his ankles.

You must imagine how a gardener prepares
To let his stored rainwater out, along
The fitted trench to nourish his best plants.
Carefully, with a spade, he lifts the stone
Gagging the throat of his trench, inch by inch,
And, as the water flows, pebbles, dead grubs,
Old bits of root and dusts are gathered and
Swept along by the speed of it, until,
Singing among the plants, the bright water
Overtakes its gardener and his control
Is lost. Likewise Scamander took Achilles.

Each time he stood, looking to see which Part, or whether
Every Part of Heaven's Commonwealth was after him,
The big wave knocked him flat. Up, trying to outleap
The arch of it, Scamander lashed aslant and wrapped his knees
In a wet skirt, scouring the furrows so his toes got no grip.
And Achilles bit his tongue and shrieked, "Father . . ."
Into the empty sky . . . "will Heaven help me? No?
Not one of you? Later, who cares? But now? Not now. Not this . . .
Why did my lying mother promise death
Should enter me imaged as Lord Apollo's metal arrowheads?
Or Hector, my best enemy, call Hector for his giant's hit
Over Helen's creditors, and I'll go brave.
Or else my death is waste.
Trapped like a stupid pig-boy beneath dirty water."

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In Heaven, two heard him:
First, the woman Prince, Athena; and with her came,
Fishwaisted Poseidon, Lord of the Home Sea.
And dressed as common soldiers they came strolling by,
And held his hand, and comforted him, with:
"Stick, my friend, stick. Swallow the scare for now.
We're with you, and, what's more, God know's it, so
Stick. This visitation means one thing—no River
Will put you down. Scamander? . . . he'll subside . . . and soon.
Now child, do this: Keep after him no matter what.
Keep coming, till
Every living Trojan squats inside his city's wall
And Hector's dead. You'll win. We promise it."

So the Greek, strong for himself, pushed up, thigh deep,
Towards the higher fields, through water
Bobbing with armoured corpses. Sunlight glittered
Off the intricate visions etched into breastplates
By Trojan silversmiths, and Trojan flesh
Bloomed over the rims of them, leather toggles sunk
To the bone. Picking his knees up, Achilles, now
Punting aside a deadman, now, swimming a stroke or two,
Remembered God's best word and struck
Like a mad-thing at the river. He beat it
With the palm of his free hand, sliced at it,
At the whorled ligaments of water, yes, sliced at them, Ah!—
There, there-there, and . . . *there*—such hatred,
Scamander had not thought, the woman Prince,
Scamander had not thought, and now, slice, slice,
Scamander could not hold the Greek! Yet,
Would not quit, bent, like a sharp crested hyoid bone,
And sucking Achilles to his midst, called out:
"Simois, let's join to finish off this Greek . . . What's that?
Two against one, you say? Yes. Or Troy is ash,
For our soldiers cannot hold him. Quick, and help, come
Spanned out as a gigantic wave, foot up to peak
A single glinting concave welt, smooth, but fanged
Back in the tumultuous throat of it, with big
Flinty stones, clubbed pumice, trees, and all
Topped by an epaulette of mucid scurf to throttle,
Mash each bone and shred the flesh and drown
The impudence of . . . who apes god.
Listen, Simois . . . nothing can help him now,
Strength, looks,—nothing. Why, that heavy armour, how
It will settle quietly, quietly into ooze,
And his fine white body, aye, slimy and coiled up
I'll suck it down a long stone flue,
And his fellow Greeks will get not one bone back,
And without a barrow to be dug can save their breath
For games."

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And the water's diamond head
Shut over Achilles, locked round his waist
Film after film of sopping froth, then
Heaved him sideways up while multitudinous crests
Bubbled around his face, blocked his nostrils with the blood
He shed an hour before. And Hera, Heaven's Queen,
Looked over the cloudy battlements of Paradise
And saw it all and saw the Greek was done and cursed Scamander,
Turned to Hephaestus her son, balanced on a silver crutch
And playing with a bag of flames, who, when his mother
Beckoned with her head, came close and listened.
"Little Cripple," she said, "would you fight Scamander for me?
Yes?"—rumpling his hair—"You must be quick, or"—
Giving him a kiss—"Achilles will be dead. So,
Do it with fire, son; an enormous fire, while"—
Twisting his ear a bit—"I fetch the white south wind to thrust
Your hot nitre amongst the Trojan dead, and you must
Weld Scamander wet to bank—now! But . . .
Wait. Little One, don't be talked out of it, eh?
More Gods are threatened than struck, Scamander's promises
Are bought. Now, off with you, and, one thing more,
Sear him, Hephaestus, till you hear me shout!"

And the Fire God
From a carroty fuse no bigger than his thumb,
Raised a burning fan as wide as Troy,
And brushed the plain with it until,
Scamander's glinting width was parched
And the smoke stopped sunlight.

Then the garnet coloured bricks
Cooped with whitestone parapets that were Troy's wall,
Loomed in smoky light, like a dark wicket bounding
The fire's destruction.
And Troy's plain was charred and all in cinders
The dead Trojans and their gear. Yet Heaven's Queen
Did not call her son, and the Cripple
Turned on the beaten river.
Flames ate at the elms,
Sad willows, clover, tamarisk and galingale
Burst in vermilion flames, heeled through the smoke,
And sank away. Rushes and the green, green lotus bed
Were scorched, and the eels and the pike began to broil.
Last of all, Scamander's back writhed like a burning poultice,
Then, reared up, into a face on fire:

"How can I fight with you, cripple! Flames in my throat,
My waters griddled by hot lacquer! Quit, and I'll quit.
As for Troy and Trojans let 'em burn. Are not we Gods
Above the quarrels of mere humans?"

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You must imagine how the water
For boiling down the fat of a juicy pig
After the women pour it in a cauldon,
Seethes and lifts as the kindling takes
And the iron sits in a flamy nest.

Scamander was like this, glazed by the clever Cripple
Who listened only to his Mother. So Scamander called:
"Queen, why does your boy pick on me?
What about other Gods who side with Troy?
I promise to leave off if *he* leaves off. What's more
I swear to turn away when Troy is burnt by Greeks.

So she called the Cripple off.
And between the echoing banks
Scamander
Rushed gently over his accustomed way.

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LETTERS

"Storm Over the Gentry"

MAY I make one comment on Mr. J. H. Hexter's essay, "Storm over the Gentry"? He implies throughout, and in the end explicitly states, that, in spite of our differences, Mr. Tawney and I agree in our "main purpose," which (he says) is to show that the 17th-century revolution in England was due "primarily" to economic causes, "to shifts in the personnel of the landowning classes and shifts in the dimensions of their estates."

It is true that since Mr. Tawney and I were both writing on a specialised economic subject (the estates of the gentry) in a specialised economic journal (*The Economic History Review*), we naturally concentrated on economic factors; but to select one particular aspect of history for special treatment is not necessarily to regard all other aspects as secondary to it. I do not suppose that Mr. Tawney holds such a view; and I think that my own long essay on "Oliver Cromwell and his Parliaments" (I am afraid I cannot agree that I have shown "a well-nigh sphinx-like silence with respect to the rôle of the House of Commons during that century") shows that I do not.

HUGH TREVOR-ROPER

Christ Church College
Oxford

ACADEMIC controversy, particularly of the more ferocious kind, is always fun, not merely to the protagonists. Most serious scholars would prefer to conduct their arguments in the Catacombs of learned periodicals rather than the Colosseum of ENCOUNTER, but since Professor Hexter has so bravely tossed his gauntlet across the Atlantic, it would be churlish not to take it up. I do so to make my own position clear, since in Mr. Hexter's article I appear merely as the diligent provider of an assist—whatever that may be—to Professor Tawney. That my own study of this problem was originally directly inspired by the latter's brilliant hypothesis, I am proud to acknowledge. And to-day my sympathies lie far closer to Professor Tawney than to Professor Trevor-Roper. But since I do not fully agree with either—or with Mr. Hexter—may I briefly analyse where I stand?

First, the facts. As Mr. Hexter observes, isolated examples prove nothing whatever about social change. Owing to the obstinate perversity of human nature, it would no doubt be possible in England of 1958 to find, if one tried, declining manual labourers and rising landed gentry. To have any validity at all, conclusions about social movements must have a statistical basis. This is what Professor Tawney attempted to provide, and what has since been severely criticised. I confess that I find many of these objections valid, and I believe that most of the conclusions based on this method must be abandoned. But what of the figures independently provided by both Professor Tawney and myself, which suggest that the 120-odd peers of 1640 owned approximately the same number of manors as the 60-odd of 1560, implying an *average* decline of about 50 per cent.? This particular calculation, which is carefully ignored by Mr. Hexter, can only be criticised by arguing that the manor is a mean-ingless unit, since it varied both at random and as widely as between the value of Mr. Hexter's house and that of the Empire State Building. But did it? In fact an analysis of the sale price of some 150 manors which changed hands between 1598 and 1607 suggests that though the variation is indeed wide, there is a sufficient degree of uniformity to allow one to draw conclusions, provided that the changes observed are of a very large order—like 50 per cent.—and provided a very large number of manors are sampled—say 2,000 or more. It is therefore not entirely unreasonable to conclude that these figures indicate a substantial decline in the territorial holdings of the aristocracy. Or am I still, to use Mr. Cooper's elegant and courteous analogy, "counting sheep"?

Now the causes: I do not believe that there is very much truth in Professor Tawney's original hypothesis that the change arose from differences in estate management. I believe that the most important cause was the intense pressure for excessive consumption to which the peer was exposed by the social conventions and expenditure opportunities of the day, coupled with certain peculiarities about the current law of entails and with the very high rate of interest. Gentry who succumbed to the same temptations naturally went the same way. I agree with Professor Trevor-Roper that the fundamental cleavage of the early 17th century was between Court and Country. But I differ in thinking that the aristocracy were the main beneficiaries of the former institution. It was they, and a statistically infinitely smaller proportion of the gentry, who were finding a new source of wealth in preying

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upon the revenues of the Stuart monarchy. As a result landed property was no longer their sole source of income.

Lastly the political consequences: Mr. Hexter should perhaps be reminded that it was not Marx but Aristotle who first suggested that shifts in political power are liable to follow shifts in the distribution of wealth. I would agree with Mr. Hexter that both Professor Tawney and Professor Trevor-Roper use arguments based on economic determinism. But it should be pointed out that whereas Professor Tawney's remarks about the rising gentry are limited to the political sphere, those of Professor Trevor-Roper spill over into the religious field as well: men became Catholic or Independent as a solace for their shrinking purses. This I believe to be fundamentally untrue, and indeed I do not see how anyone can study the records of the 17th century without coming to the conclusion—also reached by Mr. Hexter—that burning religious conviction and a passionate devotion to the rule of law were the two dominating factors in the minds of most of the protagonists in the great political struggle; and that these opinions cannot be explained exclusively, or even predominantly, in economic terms.

Having said this, however, it does not follow that social and economic changes were of no significance. Mr. Hexter himself admits the phenomena that Professor Tawney set out to explain, that by 1640 the House of Commons had become the dominant political institution, that in 1642–45, for the first time in history, an alliance of the Crown, the Church, and most of the aristocracy was roundly defeated.

It should be pointed out that much of the sound and fury of this controversy has arisen thanks to uncertainty about *which* revolution is under discussion. For the English revolution, like the French, went through several very distinct phases. In 1640–41 the rich gentry, both Presbyterian and anti-Laudian Anglican, joined together with many of the aristocracy to destroy the basis of authoritarian rule in Church and State. As Mr. Hexter rightly points out, they were still, even at this stage, not seeking power for themselves. The second phase lasted from 1642–45 when an *almost equally divided* gentry fought one another, the group associated with London and the merchant classes defeating that which rallied round the King and most of the aristocracy. Lastly came the triumph of the Independants. Who these men were we do not yet know, though illumination is promised shortly in a book to be published this year. Now Professor Trevor-Roper, if I understand him aright, has been talking about the third phase of the revolution, I have been concerned exclusively with the first, and Professor Tawney with the first, and, initially, the second. Professor Tawney's introduction to a recent book on the Long Parliament would suggest, however, that he too would now confine his hypothesis to the first. The political events—and the social movement outlined by Professor Tawney—*may* therefore allow room for both a rising and a declining gentry: the two are not incompatible.

Mr. Hexter's deus ex machina to explain the rise to political power of the gentry is altogether too superficial: he says that the aristocracy lost military control. Of course; but why did this happen? The causes are surely deeply rooted in the history of the previous hundred years: the rise to overwhelming power of the state, gathering to itself loyalties that in the late Middle Ages had been widely dispersed; the growth among the gentry of higher education and the Grand Tour and of experience in local government and in Parliament; the transfer of aristocratic wealth and interest from feudal power in the country to the courtly extravagances of renaissance taste; the growing cleavage between many of the aristocracy and the gentry in religious ideas which led to a decline of "clientage" in the early 17th century; the arbitrary exactions of the Crown in support of a narrow parasitic group of courtiers; and last but not least, the shift in national income from the greatest landowners, who were normally peers, to a wider group of second-rank magnates, whose number increased rapidly thanks to the throwing of large sections of ex-monastic property on to the market. This socio-economic factor is certainly not an explanation by itself; but it is the *sine qua non* of the political development.

To conclude: as regards methods, I do not see much virtue in conducting very complicated academic discussions by bellowing through a megaphone in the market-place; I have a certain distaste for using the 17th-century gentry to support the ideas of the 20th-century cold war; I find personal rudeness to a colleague, whether eminent or humble, more ill-mannered than amusing. I believe that much of Professor Tawney's statistical apparatus must be discarded, that his explanation of the causes of social change is unsatisfactory, and that his political conclusions gravely underestimated the independent forces of religious passion and constitutional belief. Nevertheless I still find his concept of the rise of the gentry the one which makes most sense both of the available evidence and of the political events. I see no reason to follow Professor Hexter in throwing the baby out with the bath-water; and although Professor Trevor-Roper prefers to balance it ingeniously on its head, I still think the child looks better the right way up.

LAWRENCE STONE

Wadham College
Oxford

IF IT is not impertinent to praise Professor Hexter's article, I should like to do so. Ever since Tawney published his reply to Trevor-Roper, what Hexter says has needed saying.

One of Hexter's most important observations is that Tawney included the king among the large manor-holders. Some others are rather trivial. The criticism that one ought not to count manors at all, because manors are not units of equal worth, is of little weight when we reflect that manors are all we have. So is the criticism concerning the small size of the sample: it is all we have, and in any case it gives us 2,500 manors, which seems a fair sample.

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Thirdly, the criticism that Tawney has biased his figures by counting as gentry all men who were not noble at the beginning of the period—whereas it is said that he should not have excluded from the nobility those who became noble during the period—is false, or at all events out of date. In his last article he has not excluded them. Hexter has apparently blundered here. His hypothetical younger son of a peer, with fifty manors, whom the king ennobled during the period, *would* appear among the nobility in Tawney's revised figures. In those figures the number of manors held by noblemen at the end of the period is practically the same as the number held by noblemen at the beginning; but since the number of noblemen had increased, it is to be presumed that the average number of manors held by the individual nobleman had decreased. This fits Tawney's thesis, although it is true that he ought to have told us the actual number of noblemen in the sample.

Tawney himself, in his original article, ascribed more importance to his figures showing the *size* of holdings. These figures, which looked so convincing, were indeed deceptive. People who had ten or more manors held 612 manors in 1561, but only 421 in 1640: a loss to the large manor-holders of 191 manors. What Tawney did not say was that 189 of these were manors sold by the king. This appeared only in his later reply to Trevor-Roper. In fact, if we leave out these manors of the king who was a special case, the distribution of manors among those who had ten or more, those who had five to nine, and those who had less than five, remains constant. Hexter might well have made more of this. It removes most of the weight from Tawney's suggestion that big landowners faced greater difficulties than small ones.

Once again, however, we must be careful. If we do not leave out the manors sold by the king, we find that they (or the same number) passed not to big or medium landowners, but entirely to the small landowners. The king lost 189 manors, the owners of less than five manors gained 193 manors. This again fits Tawney's general thesis.

Tawney's figures may still contain illusions but as they stand they disclose four facts. (1) The king was selling. (2) Apart from this, the average size of estates apparently remained constant. (3) The average size of the estate of a nobleman probably declined. (4) Small landowners, and/or men hitherto without land, were buying.

I agree that Tawney's figures can bemuse and that they were originally misleading. It remains true that they fit the general thesis of a rising gentry. We must remember that Tawney used the term gentry very widely. He was not speaking only of landed gentlemen, but of professional men and civil servants as well. In fact, his figures suit Trevor-Roper too, for it is easy to imagine that the small men who were buying were those whom Trevor-Roper has permitted to rise through service to the crown and so forth.

But Tawney's figures disclose also a fifth fact, namely that the manors that passed from one category to another in a period of eighty years were only eight per cent. of the total sample. This is no social revolution. It cannot explain a political revolution, whether as Tawney sees it or as Trevor-Roper sees it. This is the most important point and here Professor Hexter is absolutely right.

Of course we knew it already. The gentry were rising, therefore they sought power. The gentry were declining, therefore they sought power. Both propositions sound equally plausible. It follows that as explanations neither could be wholly adequate.

As Hexter says, it is a well-known fact that in the 17th century the important men sat in the House of Commons, not in the House of Lords. Many of them owned great estates and were very rich. But the political question is not why *they* resisted the king, but why *anyone* resisted him. They said they resisted him because he was attacking their liberty. He was attacking their liberty. This was not only a good reason for resisting him, but (for all I can see) the true reason why they did. Hexter says he is a whig on this point. I hope it will soon be said that we are all whigs now.

R. W. K. Hinton

Peterhouse
Cambridge

As one who has just been entertained and relieved by Professor Hexter's article "Storm over the Gentry," may I add one point? On page 33 Professor Hexter quotes Raleigh, Bacon, and Selden as "saying very emphatically that *the magnates do not directly control arms and men as they once did,* that the old relation between high status on great landed wealth and a great *military* following no longer subsists." He does not extend his line of quotations to include Harrington; but it would have been worth doing so. To Professor Tawney, Harrington is the prophet who sensed the rise of the gentry; to Professor Trevor-Roper, he is the provider of wish-fulfilling fantasies to the gentry in decline. But, I believe, a dispassionate reading of his works will show that he never spoke of or discussed the kind of economic change which is being asserted or denied in the present controversy. He alludes once, in the Second Part of the Preliminaries to *Oceana*, to the purchase of monastic lands by the commons—"gentry" is a term he does not use—but once only; and it is additional to the main structure of his argument. Harrington believed that a feudal form of society, the "Gothic balance," had been brought into England by the Anglo-Saxons, and that in this society the proprietors of land had all been military vassals of great lords, for whom they were compelled to fight at demand. He also believed that this system had lasted without much change until the advent of the Tudors—it was to statutes of Henry VII and Henry VIII that he attributed the end of the magnates' control over their military tenants. If there is a "rise of the gentry" in Harrington at all, therefore, it has little to do with rent, sale, or profit; it is the emancipation of the landed commoner from the status of vassal, compelled to fight for his lord, and his emergence as freeholder, able to fight for himself and the commonwealth which he and his kind compose. The whole process is a military and civic one, scarcely "economic" in any useful sense of the

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word. Harrington was in fact saying very much what Professor Hexter quotes Raleigh, Bacon, and Selden as saying, and it is with them that he belongs. (Bacon and Selden were used by him as authorities, and Raleigh's *Prerogative of Parliaments* reads like a foreshadowing of much in *Oceana*.) One may venture to associate him even more closely with Professor Hexter's thesis by suggesting that the idea that a feudal society survived until the advent of the Tudors may have rested in part upon memories of the retainer system, to which Professor Hexter draws our attention. It was certainly so with John Aubrey, who held the same idea; and Aubrey attended meetings of Harrington's Rota Club, and used Harringtonian language.

Harrington's reputation does not stand or fall with the outcome of the Tawney–Trevor-Roper controversy. To suppose that it does is to commit the fallacy of supposing that thought "reflects" contemporary social processes, without enquiring how this reflecting happens; and of assuming that the social processes "reflected" in a 17th-century mind can only be those discovered by 20th-century historians. Harrington knew what he meant and stated it in fanciful but intelligible language. If he is read in his own right, and not as one going before to prepare the way for either Tawney or Trevor-Roper, his real meaning and the character of *his thought* will emerge.

J. G. A. Pocock

St. John's College
Cambridge

Professor Hexter's article in your May issue, "Storm over the Gentry," is an entertaining account of the controversy between Professors Tawney and Trevor-Roper. But it would be a pity if readers unfamiliar with the issues should think he holds the balance as even as he purports to do. His criticisms of Professor Trevor-Roper seem to me cogent and telling. But he is less than fair to Professor Tawney. It is—how shall we put it?—disingenuous to describe as "Tawneyese" a Marxist use of the word *feudal* which Professor Tawney has specifically disavowed. Professor Hexter summarises accurately enough various criticisms of Tawney's thesis made by other historians, sometimes remembering to acknowledge his sources. Many of these criticisms are valid. But when he ventures on points of his own Professor Hexter is less successful. He accuses both contestants of "a well-nigh sphinx-like silence with respect to the rôle of the House of Commons," a silence which students of constitutional history find "perplexing." This really makes one wonder whether he has read the article he is criticising. For Professor Tawney's "The Rise of the Gentry" is designed to show that the significance of the social changes analysed is precisely that they enabled "the House of Commons 'to raise the head which since hath been so high and formidable' " to King and House of Lords. Professor Hexter distinguishes, wrongly, between "the rich, well-educated knights and squires who sat in the Parliaments of James I and Charles I" and "the brisk, hard-bitten, small gentry of Professor Tawney." Professor Tawney makes no such distinction, as anyone can see who reads pages 6 and 34–7 of his article.

Professor Hexter offers two suggestions of his own. First, so important that he italicises it, the discovery that in the decades before the civil war *"the magnates do not directly control arms and men as they once did."* This is true, and was new when Professor Tawney pointed it out forty-six years ago in *The Agrarian Problem of the 16th Century*. It is in a sense the starting-point of "The Rise of the Gentry" and *Harrington's Interpretation of his Age*. Secondly, Professor Hexter reminds us that religious and constitutional issues were also important in the 17th-century revolution, and suggests that Professors Tawney and Trevor-Roper ignore them. He is, however, not so naïve as he wishes to appear. His own admirable work is a favourite quarry for those who wish to demonstrate that religious divisions were not decisive in the civil war period. This makes the less excusable his denigration of the giant upon whose shoulders all historians of the 17th century stand. For Professor Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* started a discussion about the relation of religion and economics which is still stimulating historians; the works which Professor Hexter attacks initiated equally valuable discussions about the links between economic and constitutional history. For this every historian is in Professor Tawney's debt, even if, like myself, he disagrees with some of his conclusions. To suggest that he is interested only in "rent rolls, estate accounts and recognisances of debt," and not at all in religion and the constitution, is an ungenerous travesty. If Professor Hexter had a better grasp of Professor Tawney's achievement his criticisms of one of our greatest living historians would be impertinent; as it is they seem to me irrelevant.

Christopher Hill

Balliol College
Oxford

"Studying Yeats"

Frank Kermode, replying to Mr. T. R. Henn (May, Encounter) entrenches himself in those arguments and adjectives he thinks it scholarly to apply to my Yeats book, "hateful," "pernicious," and the rest, hoping perhaps that I shall take him up. One cannot argue with intolerance and, beyond denying that I had any one of the "ultimate objects" he imputes to my work, I am not going to answer him.

I ought, on the other hand, to add to one of Mr. Kermode's remarks: where he says that I owe a debt to Virginia Moore. I am indeed indebted for my general view of Yeats both to her and to Thomas Parkinson; also to the studies by Hazard Adams and Margaret Rudd. I am sorry that my book has been less than fair to them, in that reasons of space forced me to limit my bibliography to those authors—they were very many—to whom actual reference is made in the text.

F. A. C. Wilson

St. Catharine's College
Cambridge

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Four Foreign Novels

IT SEEMS to me very surprising that in his review of "Four Foreign Novels" (ENCOUNTER, May 1958) Mr. Hilary Corke should have omitted to give the names of the translators. True, as the translator of Max Frisch's *I'm not Stiller*, I have an axe to grind in this instance; but such omission is all too common in England, though I have never seen an American or Continental review of a literary novel in which the name of the translator was not given. Surely it is a piece of information at least equal in importance to the name of the publisher or the price. Or would your reviewer subscribe to the evaluation of the translator's rôle expressed in the reply of another reviewer to a similar complaint made in private conversation: "Well, I didn't give the printer's name either"?

MICHAEL BULLOCK

Harrow, Middx.

"Back Home to Mum"

MR. C. SEMMLER says in your June issue that he has not heard the expressions "dekko," "my oath," and "by Cripes" used in Australia in twenty years. I must assume that he has spent much of this period incarcerated in a soundproof studio with the plum-voiced announcer of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. When I left Australia some years ago all those expressions were widely used. I still say "Cripes" in moments of astonishment, such as I felt when I read Mr. Semmler's letter. "My oath" has never been one of my favourite affirmations, but several of my colleagues on a Sydney newspaper not only used it frequently but often prefixed the word "oath" with an ornamental adjective of Anglo-Saxon origin. Some, with a curious ellipsis, would omit the word "oath" altogether and use only the possessive pronoun and the adjective. Perhaps Mr. Semmler has heard only this elliptical form and does not realise that the word "oath" is understood. "Give us a dekko," meaning "give me a look," could be heard almost anywhere outside the walls of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

BRIAN MAY

The Reform Club
London

If any reader has an unwanted copy of the September 1955 issue (No. 24) in reasonably good condition we should be glad to buy it, as it is out of stock. We offer 3s per copy, plus postage. Please send copies in a strong envelope to ENCOUNTER, 25 Haymarket, London.

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Zest, humour and adventure among Glasgow's back streets and the Western Isles.

Hutchinson

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DISCUSSION

Privilege in Journalism

The Contrast between the British and the American Press

[*In our May issue, we published Mr. Charles Curran's article on the American Press: "AOT in U.S.A." He here follows up that article with some comments on a striking feature of American journalism, as seen by British eyes.*—ED.]

FOR a British newspaperman, to go from Fleet Street to New York is like going from Dartmoor to Mayfair. He passes from a society where he is trammelled into one where he feels privileged. Of all the differences between British and American journalism, this difference in the status of its practitioners is the most important, as well as the most impressive. There are two reasons for it. The main one is that the United States, by contrast with Britain, has a classless social structure with an egalitarian climate. The secondary reason is that the legal restraints imposed on the British Press do not exist in the United States. The two are largely cause and effect.

Britain is still a plural society. Despite her big redistributions of political and economic power, she remains a country dominated by an upper class, set apart from the rest of the population, marked by differences in upbringing, education, outlook, and traditions. Mass journalism and upper-class values are always at variance. Since those values are esteemed, in deferential Britain, by other classes as well, news-getting is a trade that must be practised in a social climate that is basically hostile to it. There is a continuous clash between intrusiveness and reticence, between the quest for facts and the dislike of publicity.

This clash is made sharper by the fact that the British newspaperman usually comes from the lower slopes of the social pyramid. If he is under 45, the chances are that his education ended in a State secondary school at 16; if he is over 45, he probably left a State elementary school at 14. He is exceptional if he comes from the upper-class matrix of preparatory school, public school, and Oxbridge University. (Only one of the eight men who now edit Britain's national morning papers has passed through the matrix. The proportion is certainly no higher at other levels of journalism.) The exceptions are more numerous than they were; but it is still true that the typical British newspaperman originates outside the complex network of relationships, conventions, shared traditions, and social attitudes that compose the upper class. He enters it as a visitor, or as an immigrant, not as a native.

Take any type-figure in that class—the permanent official at the head of a Government department, a High Court judge, a Church of England bishop, a banker, a landowner, an ambassador, a Guards officer, the master of an Oxbridge college, a member of one of the families in the social orbit of the Throne. Common to all of them is the tacit presumption that a mass-circulation journalist is their social and cultural inferior. This presumption is not by any means irrebuttable; it can be negatived by individuals. But it is always there. The consequences are extensive, though not easy to define. Only a social astronomer as percipient as Trollope or Henry James could chart all the nuances of a cordial conversation between, say, a journalist who left an elementary school at 14 and a Permanent Under-Secretary who has scaled the peaks of Whitehall by way of Eton, Christ Church, an All Souls fellowship, and the Athenæum.

The class frontiers, of course, are not so rigid as they were, and the traffic across them—for journalists and other people—is growing all the time. But the newspaperman finds the journey easier if he travels on a journal that does not seek a mass circulation. (To avoid any embarrassment to contemporary examples, let me cite the late L. J. Garvin, the hungry child of a Merseyside labourer, who rose to the editorial chair of *The Observer* and became the Fleet Street bell-wether of Tory Imperialism. His transit was dazzling, but inconclusive. For after making it, Mr. Garvin was extruded by his nobleman proprietor as unceremoniously as if he had been a pregnant housemaid.) In spite of increased social mobility, a mass-circulation journalist remains a person from a different world to the controlling personalities of upper-class Britain (and still more to their womenfolk). He may be Daisy Miller; or he may be Mr. Salteena. In any event—as that great outsider Edmund Burke told the Duke of Bedford—he must show his passport at every turnpike.

EX 3-6400

Now the newspaperman's position in the United States is a complete contrast. For the American social structure is broadly homogenous. It contains no upper class marked off from the mass by education, or speech, or conventions, or any other differentials. It has no tradition of hierarchy, or deference, or inherited superiority. Its climate is fiercely hostile to any such pretensions. The people who exercise authority bear little resemblance to their British equivalents. So far from claiming prestige, they are eager to disclaim it, to conceal anything that may distinguish their tastes, habits, recreations,

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or vocabularies from those of a truck-driver. The United States is a country where imitation is the tribute that the eminent pay to the masses; and they pay it all the time. The Supreme Court Justice and the barman, the ambassador and the mechanic, the Presidential candidate and Willy Loman, all went to the same kind of schools, grew up in the same social soil—or, if they did not, are at pains to behave as if they did. President Eisenhower, like Mr. Truman, is apparently not suspected of being a cultivated gentleman with scholarly tastes; but if he were, he would go to all lengths to rebut the suspicion. A British Prime Minister can avow a liking for Horace, or Jane Austen, or Cézanne without electoral risk; but for an American politician to do so would be like proclaiming a taste for wife-beating.

Whatever may be the drawbacks of such a society, the advantages it gives to the journalist are undeniable and enormous. There are no impediments to news-getting. Privacy is unpopular. It is taken for granted that readers have a right to know anything that journalists think may interest them, from the state of the Presidential ileum to the chest measurements of a woman marrying her tenth husband. It is taken for granted that anybody who occupies a public position of any sort, or who, for whatever reason, attracts any public attention or curiosity, shall be accessible to the Press at all times; that he, or she, shall answer questions, supply information, pose for photographs. The universal accessibility of the United States is summed up by the Washington telephone directory. When you open that volume you find, set out in large type, a list of useful numbers that range from the police and the fire brigade to the United States Secret Service—EX 3-6400. The telephone number of all America is EX 3-6400.

So far as I could learn, this right of access has one limitation only. It does not usually extend to Negro reporters. Newspaper executives in several American cities gave me the same explanation. To quote one of them, a Pacific Coast managing editor:

"We took on a Negro university graduate as a reporter. But whenever we sent him out on stories he ran into trouble from women. A woman finding a black man at her door will scream, call the neighbours, telephone the police, send her husband here to protest. If anybody can persuade women, particularly working-class housewives, that a black face on the doorstep isn't the prelude to rape, I'll be delighted. As things are, Negro reporters lose heart. They feel, naturally enough, that if they must be kept off some kinds of story they don't pull their weight."

This editor added: "It made me so mad, when our Negro reporter quit, that I hired a Chinese in his place. And the Chinese has no trouble at all. In fact, if you believe the gossip in this office, women find his yellow face just irresistible. The other reporters say he sleeps with a woman every time he goes on a story. Why, most of them have now taken to eating Chinese food."

The veto is not universal. One of the best reporters in the United States is a Negro—Mr. Carl Rowan of the Minneapolis *Tribune* (that distinguished newspaper which looks, to a Fleet Street eye, like the result of a liaison between the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mirror*).

The Ruling Dogma

American journalism flourishes because of a doctrine that the United States has elevated into an all-but-infallible dogma: the doctrine of public interest. It is this doctrine that has swept away nearly all the legal restrictions that weigh on the British Press. It has smothered both legislative privilege and contempt of court. Also, it has virtually nullified the laws of libel.

Legislative privilege is the right enjoyed by the British Parliament to protect itself from interference, by turning itself into a tribunal with power to punish. Invented as a weapon to stop meddling by the Stuart kings, it is nowadays invoked by Socialist politicians in order to threaten the Press. All the legislatures set up in the British colonies of North America could claim a similar privilege; and originally most of them did (as the Canadian Parliament still does). But the United States legislatures, in Washington or in the State capitals, are about as likely to assert privilege against the Press as to recommend the conferment of peerages.

Contempt of court—the legal machinery for preventing the publication of material likely to prejudice an accused man—has likewise become a dead letter. Let me illustrate by an example.

Some time ago, a moneylender's body was found in a trunk at a New York railway station. The police detained a man named Edward Polakowski. Next day, one New York newspaper headlined its front page ADMITS KILLING TRUNK VICTIM. Beneath the headline was a picture of Polakowski, taken inside the police station while being questioned. The caption quoted a detective as saying "We are sure he is the killer." On an inside page, under the headline CONFESSES IN TRUNK SLAYING, was an account, filling several columns, that purported to record exactly what Polakowski had told the police; it included both a full admission and a detailed explanation of his motive.

Now if any British newspaper handled a London murder mystery in this way, there would be a legal earthquake. It would be brought at once before a High Court judge, on a summons obtained by the head of the English Bar, for contempt of court. The headlines alone would send both the editor and his proprietor to prison. Each would be heavily fined as well. There would be a public outcry at the injustice done to Polakowski. A Government enquiry would be set up, to discover how the Press came to be present at the questioning; and every police officer responsible in any way for that grave breach of regulations would undergo a mauling. For in Britain, the moment a man is accused, no newspaper may print one word about his alleged crime unless it is stated in court.

The example I have quoted is normal Press practice throughout the United States. There, when someone is arrested, the newspapers are free to print his criminal record, if he has one, at once, and in full. They can also print every detail of his alleged

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offence, as well as interviews with the police and with the witnesses who will be called at his trial. Any suggestion that all this is unfair to the arrested man, that it convicts him in advance—all such considerations count for nothing against the public interest doctrine. It is a startling contrast, not only with Britain but also with Canada. There are some disreputable newspapers in Canada; one city there harbours a tabloid weekly that is, in my opinion, the lewdest piece of pornographic journalism in the English language. But even such a periodical dare not tamper with the administration of justice as reputable newspapers do, all the time, all over the United States.

Libel Made Easy

JUST as revolutionary is the impact of the public interest doctrine on the libel laws. It has made them virtually unrecognisable to any British lawyer or newspaperman.

Practically speaking, the publication of libellous material throughout the United States is now restrained by two considerations only—neither of them a matter of law. One is a newspaper's concern for its good name, and the damage that may be done to it in public esteem (as well as to its circulation and advertising revenue). The other is fear of juries. An editor needs to beware of libel if (but only if) it is of a nature likely to provoke the indignation of a jury.

Libel case juries are as variable, and as unpredictable, in the United States as they are in Britain. But there is this big difference between them. The American jury tends to presume that the publication of anything is desirable *per se*, and that the burden of proof rests firmly on the shoulders of anyone who seeks to restrict it. Consequently, a prospective litigant is restrained—as he is not in Britain—by the knowledge that he must challenge the public interest doctrine as well as the libel. The doctrine, in fact, is joined as a defendant in every libel suit. Sometimes it is dismissed from the case. When that happens, the damages awarded against the newspaper are likely to be crushing. But it does not happen very often.

For the doctrine is a vast umbrella that keeps off everything short of a cloudburst. It means, in practice, that for any politician, and for almost anyone who seeks to obtain public notice, there is virtually no legal protection against attacks in print. If someone in either of these categories sues for libel, the jury is likely to take the view that to draw attention to yourself is a voluntary act, and that in doing so you must be presumed to foresee the probable consequences—one of them being hostile publicity. To get a jury to take a different view, the attacks must be gross indeed.

Consequently, the doctrine of public interest has produced this result: the area in which the American Press may operate, both in the reporting of fact and in comment, has been widened to an extent unprecedented in newspaper history. By contrast with Britain, it is virtually unlimited. This contrast constitutes a problem that will have to be tackled very soon.

The Paper Curtain

AS THINGS are, material which may be published with impunity in the United States may become actionable if it is supplied to British readers. A while back, the American publication *Newsweek* printed some material about an English murder trial. Since *Newsweek* is sold here, it was promptly brought before the High Court on a charge of contempt. The Court did not impose any penalty on *Newsweek*, because the offending material had been compiled in New York; but the English distributors were fined £50.

The implications of this are far-reaching. For it makes the free interchange of newspapers, magazines, and books across the Atlantic into a dangerous trade. It means that the British public may be denied access to news—perhaps news of importance—that is freely available in the United States. Let me illustrate the possibilities with a supposititious example.

Mr. X, a British statesman, goes to New York. There he contracts a liaison with Mrs. Y, the wife of an American public man. Without seeking a divorce, Mr. Y makes public a series of grave accusations against Mr. X. Every detail can be (and certainly will be) printed by the American Press. How much can be told to British readers? The answer must be: hardly anything.

Since Mr. Y does not seek a divorce, there will be no legal proceedings that can be safely reported here. A British newspaper that reproduces American Press extracts will do so at its peril; for if Mr. X sues it for libel it has virtually no defence. Necessarily, it cannot know whether the accusations are true. It circulates them, scandalous though they are, simply because they have been printed elsewhere—a plea that is unlikely to count for much with a British judge, or a British jury either. Yet suppose that Mr. X is a statesman of great promise, like Dilke, or of great power, like Parnell. Is not every detail about his private disaster of great and legitimate interest to British readers? Why should they be less well-informed than Americans, about a matter that concerns them as well? Must they be excluded from knowledge by the paper curtain that now stretches across the Atlantic?

Every advance in the techniques of communication—broadcasting, television, the likelihood of newspapers printing editions on each side of the Atlantic as easily as the London *Daily Mail* now prints in Manchester—will make the problem of the paper curtain still more acute. Soon, no doubt, it will be possible to transmit American TV programmes direct to Britain. (The proposed Atlantic television cable will affect Anglo-American relations as profoundly as did the Great Eastern when she laid the first ocean telegraph in 1865.) In the imaginary case that I have constructed, suppose that Mr. Y were to make his accusations against Mr. X on an American TV programme addressed to British viewers. What would the legal position be then?

It is much easier to state the problem than the solution. For it is inconceivable that the United States would ever enforce the legal restraints on

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publication that now exist in Britain. It is very hard to imagine Britain abolishing those restraints so as to bring herself in line with American practice. But it is also impossible to see how there can be, in the long run, any alternative to a uniform law governing publication, both in print and by broadcasting, on both sides of the Atlantic.

The lawyers of Britain, Canada, and the United States had better apply their combined ingenuity to the problem of the paper curtain. For if they do not solve it, the radio and TV technicians certainly will—by removing it. The paper curtain will be torn apart as soon as American TV crosses the Atlantic.

So long as the curtain stays in position, the privileged status enjoyed by the American newspaperman over his British colleagues will continue to be enjoyed by the American public too.

Charles Curran

Algeria in 1958

The Interdependent Enemies

[*In our last month's issue, we published a Letter from Paris by Waverley Root on "Algeria seen from Chez Lipp," which analysed the vagaries of French policy. We here present some observations on the enduring realities of the Algerian problem, which any policy will have to cope with. The author, an ethnologist by profession, is generally regarded in France as the outstanding authority on Algeria and its peoples. She lived and worked in North Africa for a good part of the past decade and speaks the various languages of the region. At present, she is on the faculty of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris.*—ED.]

IN THE forests of North America there exists a species of pugnacious and stupid deer, the males of which, when fighting, sometimes get their huge antlers interlocked and die together, snout to snout. We are reminded of these deer when we look at the situation in Algeria to-day.

It is impossible to imagine two communities more completely dependent on each other than the French and the Algerian. They are in our power and we are in theirs, for we have the means of depriving them of everything they wish for, while they can effectively obstruct all our schemes for the future. What have the Algerians to lose if they lose our friendship? Almost everything—that is to say their daily bread, their livelihood, their children's future, and even perhaps eventually the freedom for which they have paid so high a price. And what have we French lost in sacrificing the confidence they had in us? Our economic independence (closely bound up with the possibilities of development in the Sahara), the security of our fellow-countrymen living in Algeria, and all our hopes connected with Africa; in short, everything we were aiming at.

At present, there are between 350,000 and 400,000 Algerian workers in France and they support, directly or indirectly, one-third of the Moslem population in the country districts of Algeria. In Algeria itself, French investments provide a livelihood for rather more than 100,000 workers. Even supposing that this capital were not withdrawn, another 1,500,000 millions of francs would have to be invested to provide the Algerians at present in France with an equivalent source of income, if they were sent back to Algeria. But such calculations can only be theoretical, because there is no country in the world which could invest 1,500,000 million francs in Algeria in the near future. At the same time France has to protect, on Algerian soil, about a million and a half people who hold, or claim, French nationality.

We are thus obliged to admit that there is, between France and Algeria, a two-way current of dependence, an "objective interdependence" which is absent from our relations with Morocco and Tunisia. This is what gives the present war its desperate ferocity.

Certain disaster will follow for either side if it wrests victory from the other. And such a deadly victory is easier to achieve than a reasonable peace which could still save the situation.

Although unlikely on the military level, a French capitulation is a possibility from the financial point of view. It would, in theory, mean an incredible victory for the Algerian rebels; but in actual fact none of their hopes would survive, because no foreign aid would be adequate to allow them to solve overnight the problem of feeding the third of their population which is supported at the moment by wages from France; and, if French public opinion were convinced that France had suffered a defeat in Algeria, there could be no question of North African workers continuing to earn their living on French soil. The repatriation of these Algerians would raise insoluble problems in Algeria itself; famine would become inevitable; there would be massacres on both sides; the European population would leave the country in panic, and so indeed would those Moslems rich enough and educated enough to get away. Such an exodus would inevitably be accompanied by a flight of capital. And those Algerians who could not escape would

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face economic, social, cultural, and even sheer biological disaster.

Military victory which is, apparently, France's immediate aim, is just as much a possibility, because our army is rapidly becoming adapted to the situation, while the Moslem population in the rural areas is growing very weary of the fighting. Nevertheless, a military victory would be a calamity, for us and for our allies, now and in the future, both inside and outside Algeria.

During the century or so that Algeria had been in their hands, the French evolved and set up certain administrative institutions on Algerian soil (mixed communes, *caïds*, *ouakḳafs*). I witnessed the collapse of these institutions in the space of six months. Yet they had been set up by people well acquainted with the country, in a favourable psychological atmosphere, and—to put it mildly—at a leisurely pace. By early 1955, they were replaced by hastily improvised substitutes which the military authorities, unfamiliar with the country, are still busy trying to acclimatise, in conditions which need no description and with such hopes of success as can be well imagined.

The old native social pattern survived longer, but it too is beginning to crumble. The division into tribes, the authority of the elders, the structure of the family, the status of women, had all been affected already to some extent, but there had been no changes comparable to the absolute upheaval that we can see taking place to-day. I am personally acquainted with Moslem families of the austere, traditional kind, in which the young daughter of the household has gone straight from wearing the veil to the putting on of blue jeans, and has stepped out of the harem into the maquis, while her old father does not know whether to feel dismay or patriotic pride. Who can imagine a reversal of the process, the betrousered heroine agreeing to put on again the white "lhaf" of Algiers or the black *haïḳ* of Constantine, or accepting the making of sweet pastry as the sole means of expressing her personality?

The administrative framework having collapsed and the social and family pattern having been destroyed, what is left? The nationalist underground organisations and our army of occupation. They alone remain, side by side in a strange kind of intimacy.

For, during the long darkness of the rebellion, all the administrative organs of a modern state have suddenly begun to develop all over Algeria. And just as the French military authorities—very unwillingly—Arabised Kabylia and the Aures country during the last hundred years (simply by building roads and making them safe for traffic), the "fellagha" have unwittingly done more to gallicise their country in the last three years than we had succeeded in doing during the previous century. Of course, they are using French ideas against the French (liberty, democracy, secularisation, social equality, the right of the oppressed to revolt). They also copy our civil and military institutions, and use them against France. It is therefore not untrue to say that what we are at this moment destroying in Algeria is an image of ourselves—a truth which only adds to the horror of the murder we are committing.

After two years of fighting (by the end of 1956), almost the whole of the Moslem population was controlled, firmly and efficiently, by the underground authorities. Clandestine magistrates, acting secretly in the settlement of private disputes, caused a drop in the number of cases judged by the official tribunals (30 per cent. in Algiers, 100 per cent. in Great Kabylia); officials, unknown to our civil service, started registering births and deaths; tax-collectors collected fines, taxes, and duties, but they also paid out pensions and family allowances. Usury was forbidden, as well as prostitution, thefts, and brawls; sumptuary laws ruled out celebrations, extravagant expenditure, and excessive dowries; and during the rigorous food blockade of Kabylia (it is still in force) I never heard any mention of the existence of a black market.

The French army in Algeria is a very impressive force, pugnacious, efficient, well disciplined, badly fed but well armed, very badly paid but thoroughly trained and experienced, as few armies are. It does what it is told to do, without being able to choose its objectives, and for the past eighteen months it has, according to instructions, been struggling to destroy the original nucleus of a population towards which we have such a great responsibility. It is carrying out this task with some success and "by all the means at its disposal." But should it achieve its goal (and it is certainly capable of doing so), what will be found to fill the vacuum it is now creating?

Over the African continent—that huge landmass adrift in unknown seas—there was, long before 1954, a very active Algerian "diaspora," which was the direct result of our good works and our wrong-doing (the two are always inextricably intermingled). By "good works," I mean the amount of education and modern experience put at the disposal of the Algerian people by France (it is to our credit, and it should not be forgotten, that the Algerian masses are far and away the most advanced in the Arab world). By "wrong-doing" I mean the way in which our compatriots in Algeria checked the activities of young, educated Moslems, thus forcing a number of them to leave their mother-country, while others resigned themselves to being "internal exiles." The Algerian "diaspora," which has considerably increased in numbers and importance since the conflict spread (that is to say, since the spring of 1956), gradually joined forces with the F.L.N. and to-day has an alarming influence on the home and foreign policies of Tunisia and Morocco, as well as on the Negro states of Africa and the countries of the Middle East. Should we achieve the military victory we have been promised for the last three years, we must expect the Algerian "emigration" to increase vastly in numbers and become set in a chronically aggressive attitude. Whether we like it or not, these Algerians outside Algeria cannot be dislodged from the positions they occupy; they can destroy any possibility of progress and peace on the African continent and can most certainly ruin all our hopes of development in the Sahara.

So far, we have considered only "Algerian"

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Algeria, if one may call it so. But there is another Algeria, French Algeria. To wipe out the first for the benefit of the second would be inhuman, but also impossible; to wipe out the second for the benefit of the first would be just as cruel—and just as unfeasible.

Had the Moslem population been less numerous, Algeria would really have become part of France (and many Moslems wanted this to happen). If the non-Moslem population had been less coherent and compact, a solution of the Tunisian type would not have presented any major difficulty. But the numerical relationship of the two groups is very deceptive (one to eight), because although strength depends on numerical superiority it can also come from other factors too—from investments, technical skill, and populous, well-organised cities. The French in Algeria are organised, armed, frightened, and aggressive, and where they are settled in numbers (Algiers, Oran, and Bone), they certainly have the upper hand. We cannot allow them to be massacred; nor can we be sure that they themselves will not resort to massacre.

The most ghastly solution, but also the "easiest," would be to have a long-drawn-out war, moving through a succession of catastrophes and wearied lulls to a form of partition. At the same time, all Algerians would gradually be expelled from France. Through a lack of imagination, both sides are moving slowly but inexorably in this direction.

However, it is important to define precisely the people we are talking about. It is true that, contrary to what we have been told, there are not 1,200,000 of them. What is a Frenchman? Who, in Algeria, claims this distinction? The non-Moslems, of course (there are 1,042,409 of them, 49,979 of whom are not naturalised): perhaps the Mozabites or dissident Moslems—we do not know exactly how many there are of them (about 60,000, let us say), and we know still less about their opinions. In official statistics, they are classed with the European minority, although some are members of the F.L.N. It is also certain that we must include in the minority a number of Moslems *from the majority*. How many? Nobody has any idea; we only know that some wish to remain French and would even risk their lives to do so. The excesses of pacification have considerably reduced their numbers, while the excesses on the rebel side have tended to increase them. There still remain a few, silent and sorrowful, stranded between the opposing tides of hatred. Who would deny them the right to be French, if they still want it, and a berth on the *Mayflower* sailing back in the colonial twilight and a guaranteed livelihood on French soil? It would be a legitimate return for Charles X's expedition.

To distinguish between such a person—our undoubted compatriot—and the "fellagha" who is as like him as his own brother is, admittedly, a most difficult task and one which the French forces have been struggling in vain to accomplish during the last three years. Their failure is excusable because even Moslems themselves are not always sure where they stand and indeed become daily more confused. Four thousand Algerians have agreed to act as municipal representatives and 239 others are category "A" French civil servants. I have many friends in both groups and I know under what a load of bitterness they have to struggle, in spite of their loyalty. There may perhaps exist in these two select bodies a firm supporter of our policy who is not at the same time a victim of it: but if so, I have never met him.

At the other extreme, the best qualified of our opponents are at this moment crowded in camps and prisons, and I visit them there whenever I can. (They are, moreover, the brothers or cousins of those I have just mentioned, and in both categories there are some with whom I have been personally acquainted for the last twenty years.) It may be that, among these people, there is to be found the fierce, fanatical, narrow-minded hater of France, whom we so often hear about. For my part, I do not doubt his existence, but I have never come across him.

If we *all* want to "win" this war, we must find—not after an interval of twelve years, nor even in the near future, but immediately—a formula which would make co-operation possible. What should this formula be? It does not matter, provided we French can agree with our opponents. For if France accepted Algeria's independence, this independence would instantly lose most of its disadvantages. On the other hand, if the Algerian rebels accepted the *loi-cadre* (framework law), they would find it sufficiently flexible to provide quick satisfaction for all their specific demands. Between the granting of complete independence and the complete acceptance of the *loi-cadre* there exists a whole series of intermediate solutions, which would necessitate only those concessions which we are perfectly prepared to grant in any case, and that we are not in a position to refuse. Why, then, do we not take the trouble to study the possibility of achieving some such solution? Because to do so would be to admit the legal existence of our opponents. We would far rather carry on indefinitely with the war, bring our country to irredeemable ruin, and sacrifice the safety of the French population in Algeria, as well as our hopes for the Sahara.

The development of the Algerian people is not a metaphysical notion, it is a fact; and the almost incredible urge which is driving the nation into the future can be felt throughout the social life of the country and even in the familiar speech of women still confined in the harem. In mountain villages, old men (the traditional guides of public opinion) now say to you: "We are old fools. The young are braver and wiser than we are." The young, for their part, are obsessed with modern ideas; equality, democracy, and secularisation. And, of course, with independence—the magic word which includes all the rest.

A call to the future has gone out from Algeria—the most violent, passionate, and justified appeal yet heard in Africa. The whole historical future of the continent will be determined by the response given to this call.

Germaine Tillion

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BOOKS

The Dustman Cometh

BECKETT'S world has changed very little since he started writing before the war, though he has improved his means of communicating it. In *Murphy* (1938), for instance, the style is far more conventional and the treatment of the theme—a down-and-out in London—closer to what may be found in Orwell and other writers of the period who liked to depict crackpots thumbing their nose at society from the safety of some sordid room. But the central figure, Murphy himself, foreshadows Malone, Molloy, and the rest: only he is still seen with some measure of objectivity. Beckett has not yet retired right inside him: or, Murphy, if you like, has not yet obtained total possession of the world, he is still a tenant (though somewhat behind with the rent), not a freeholder. The mere fact that he can be described in the novel as a "seedy solipsist" shows how far his creator had yet to travel along his chosen road. The description would equally fit all Murphy's successors but you won't find any phrase like it in the later books. Indeed, the last thing that would occur to Malone, say—perhaps the only thing one could safely say would not occur to him—is that he is a seedy solipsist. Of course, even for Murphy the universe was all in his mind, and all the better for it, no doubt: but Beckett has to devote a whole chapter to telling us this, a clumsy device for an existential writer and one of the things that had to be dropped before he could produce a good novel in his own *genre*. *Malone Dies* is such a novel: it is short and fairly concentrated. *Watt* is longer, and after a brilliantly funny opening becomes rather tedious, with a lot of irritating Joycean stylistic mannerisms. The one-act play *Endgame* is perhaps Beckett's best work to date. It is even better than *Godot* because the latter has a superfluous second act (it couldn't, on Beckett's premises, help being superfluous).

To go back to Murphy for a moment, his mind did not only contain the whole world but was also, we are told, "impermeable to the vicissitudes of the body." So are the minds of Molloy, Malone, and the other characters, which is just as well, considering what they have to put up with: the vicissitudes increase as the books proceed. That is the main difference between one Beckett book and another, except that some of them were first written in French, but that doesn't seem a very important distinction since he mostly makes his own translations. He is a painter who prefers to stick to a single landscape.

Most people by now have some idea of what the Beckett landscape is like. A world without end at the end of the world, a world always on the point of ending yet never quite able to bring itself to end. A grey world, with one figure in it, the departing guest who is always on the point of going yet never quite able to bring himself to go. You can't mistake this figure, the Beckett hero. His name often begins with M. He is old, though his actual age, like most things about him, is indeterminate. He is poor, ill, dying, impotent, with only partial use of his senses, crippled or perhaps bedridden. This is usually the point at which the reader comes in. M. appears, tells you the main thing about himself that he can remember ("I shall soon be quite dead at last in spite of all"), and from then on, for everything else, you have to rely on what he tells you as it occurs to him. Often he isn't very sure of his facts. He is crawling back towards his own past as well as forward to as much of his future as still remains. His discoveries, when he makes them, are useless: they change nothing, they prove nothing. He receives each fresh fact about himself without surprise and without

Watt. By SAMUEL BECKETT. *The Olympia Press, Paris*. 15s.

Malone Dies. By SAMUEL BECKETT. *John Calder*. 10s. 6d.

Endgame. A play by SAMUEL BECKETT. *Faber and Faber*. 10s. 6d.

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much interest. Thus Molloy finds his bicycle and says "I didn't know I had one, which enables me to realise that, crippled though I was, I was no mean cyclist at that period." M.'s is the holy beggar's attitude to life. Thus Malone decides to write down his thoughts, because when he just said them he used to forget what he had said: "knowing perfectly well I had no exercise book, I rummaged in my possessions in the hope of finding one. I was not disappointed, not surprised." The palaver goes on till the pencil wears down, the stick is lost, the last dog biscuit eaten. After that M. trails off, only to reappear in the next book. He has the persistence of literature rather than that of life.

The Beckett hero is obsessed with time passing, the last ticks before zero hour. He is as near to death as it is possible for a man to be and still live. His attitude is "It'll soon be over" (Molloy), "This can't possibly go on much longer" (Malone). You could sum it up by quoting that joke in *Ulysses* about the character who is always "expecting every moment to be his next." What redeems a good deal of Beckett's work from tedium is his curious Dublin sense of humour: "Sometimes I miss not being able to crawl around any more. But I am not much given to nostalgia." His characters are like men in a pub telling a very long shaggy dog story. Everybody has left, except perhaps one or two people rather like the story-teller: perhaps, indeed, they *are* the story-teller. And the story continues, and nobody laughs, not because it isn't funny (it quite often is) but because it is funny in the way life is funny when we've heard it all too often: "we still find it funny but you don't laugh any more."

What Malone calls (taking the words out of the critic's mouth?) "all this ballsaching poppycock about life and death, if that is what it is about, and I suppose it is, because nothing was ever about anything else to the best of my recollection," is a vision of reality after you have stripped from it all differentiating ambitions, prejudices, illusions, pleasures, special interests, hopes, fears, and desires. This may sound a pretty tall order, but it isn't to Beckett because he never suggests that there is anything missing from his world. Energy is superfluous, experience non-existent, the sense of spiritual arrest is total. Man is in the condemned cell, but whereas for other writers he is guilty and deserves to be there, for Beckett he is absolutely and wretchedly innocent. And all concepts outside this world are unimaginable; all concepts inside it are undistinguishable: "ideas are all alike when you get to know them." The very remarkable prose helps here: all its elements are equally important or unimportant, there are no stresses, no emphases, only the continuum of an existence

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without choice. The jokes are like reflexes, or coughs, the occasional lyrical passages like the tears of those who have forgotten what they are weeping for. Thus the total content, while each item is separately precise and intelligible, adds up to a kind of vast meaningless generalisation: "nothing is more real than nothing."

This view of the fag-end of human effort, the prolonged soliloquy at the cemetery gate, is Beckett's contribution to contemporary literature. "It must be nearly finished": the last articulate mumble of man marooned in the moments between "Time, Gentlemen, Please" and closing time. The trouble is, the next bloody awful day they open again. The end is what never ends. There is no doubt that Beckett refashions this medieval view of mortality in terms of modern spiritual decline with astonishing force and power. There are pages in his work that surpass anything else now being written. Nevertheless, I don't think it's unfair to Beckett to compare him with the late Eugene O'Neill. *The Iceman Cometh* is a masterpiece composed on a scale which makes Beckett's work look narrow and limited. It shows that, even at the end of the line, the point of no return, the most derelict human heart must still develop as a flower pushes up through asphalt; life is still distinguishable from death even if only by the vitality of its illusions. The Beckett proposition "nothing is more real than nothing" only becomes true the moment after the death of man, not the moment before it.

K. W. Gransden

The Price of Prestige

British Economic Policy since the War. By ANDREW SHONFIELD. *Penguin Books.* 3s. 6d.

THIS is an account of post-war economic policy written in political terms. By this I do not mean that it is written from a party-political standpoint, but that economic decisions are treated as having an essentially political motivation. Academic economists are constantly saying that their job is merely to analyse and display the various alternative courses of action, and that the choice between these courses, involving as it must a political judgment, can be made only by politicians. Yet when writing about economic affairs they seldom give nearly enough weight to the overriding rôle of political attitudes in the determination of economic policy. Mr. Shonfield, by contrast, does so; and his book may be described as a history of that part of post-war British politics which was concerned with economic affairs.

Mr. Shonfield is unashamedly propounding a thesis, which may be summarised as follows. The British rate of economic growth since 1945 has been low, not only by comparison with that of other countries, but above all in relation to the many wholly reasonable demands which are made on our resources; the consequent feeling of strain, and the persistent sense of a lack of any margin in reserve, have led to a dangerous national malaise and lassitude and an intensified class struggle over wages and profits. This low rate of growth is to be attributed to an unduly low level of investment. This in turn is traced to a chronically weak foreign exchange position, which, constantly teetering over into sterling crises, compels governments to defend the pound by cutting the thing most obviously at hand, namely, domestic investment.

It is at this point that Mr. Shonfield's analysis becomes explicitly political; for he attributes the foreign exchange weakness, which he rightly regards as crucial, to a series of political decisions all animated by the same motive: the desire to maintain British prestige and the status of a world power, even though the cost of so doing is, under present-day conditions, beyond the capacity of the British economy.

The most onerous part of this cost is incurred in the attempt to restore London to its pre-war position as the financial centre of the world: that is, to maintain sterling as the dominant world trading currency, and the sterling area as a system characterised increasingly by only one significant feature—the uncontrolled export of capital from Britain. The enormous supply of sterling which, in consequence, is lying around the world makes the pound extremely vulnerable to speculative movements. Since our reserves are too small to stand the strain of any considerable flight from the pound, each such movement compels us to take such internal measures as will reverse the speculative pressure; and since the foreign holders of sterling are obsessed by a naïve and illiterate view of what constitutes "inflation," these measures must always take the form of cutting back demand and output.

We thus not only surrender our freedom of economic action to "the little gnome in a Zurich bank at the end of a telephone line" (who, as Mr. Shonfield sadly points out, has replaced William Tell as the symbol of the Swiss in the British mind), but the restriction takes the most painful form possible, namely, a virtual veto on rapid economic expansion; for this, in the little gnome's vocabulary, is synonymous with inflation. Our economic stagnation since 1956, and the appalling loss of output associated with it, are largely to be traced to this fear of a run on sterling.

Mr. Shonfield adduces other examples of

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"prestige-economics"—an extravagantly high level of overseas investment, a large expenditure on the upkeep of overseas garrisons and bases, and (since 1951) a huge military effort at home. He does not perhaps always give due weight to the genuine political arguments for some of these expenditures; but he is right to criticise the unconcerned way in which one after another was undertaken with no attempt to estimate the total cost. In any event, even if none of these other expenditures was in question, his argument could still rest quite securely on the criticism of our foreign exchange policy: namely, that the political (and largely emotional) decision to restore London to the position of world banker has imposed an intolerable strain on our possibilities of economic growth.

I personally accept (with a few reservations) Mr. Shonfield's thesis. But the book is to be recommended both as a piece of political history and as a critique of economic policy, regardless of the particular thesis. The narrative of events is full and accurate, and at times extremely funny; more than once, moreover, it reveals behind-the-scenes struggles which are still not generally known. The comment is always shrewd and often original; and Mr. Shonfield strays happily (and justifiably) into those realms of social psychology which most economists are too timid to enter. The approach is notably fair-minded: the Labour Party and the Conservative Party, the Trade Unions and industrialists, receive equal rations of thwacks on the head. The thesis is one of crucial importance, which all political and economic students, whatever their views, must either accept or be able to rebut. And the book is well and clearly written, free from economic jargon, and comprehensible to any intelligent layman. Indeed, this is economic journalism of the highest kind—and a kind all too rare in Britain where, perhaps because we lack periodicals of the stature of *Fortune*, we also lack regular writers on social and economic affairs of the calibre of (for example) Daniel Bell and William Whyte.

I have a few criticisms. Mr. Shonfield occasionally displays too trusting an attitude towards figures. For example, he lays too much stress on the statistics which purport to show that net investment in Britain over the last decade has been only some 6 per cent. annually of the national income, whereas in, say, Norway it has been over 20 per cent—from which one would surely deduce that every Norwegian must by now possess two Cadillacs, while British citizens were still without running water and a railway system. The answer is that such comparisons can often be wildly misleading. More serious, the last chapter, in which Mr. Shonfield turns from analysing past policy to suggesting future policy, gives the impression of having been written in frantic haste. As it stands, it does not add up to a realistic or practicable programme; and readers would be well advised to treat its proposals as only the most general signposts to the desirable direction of policy. But these criticisms affect neither the broad validity of the thesis put forward, nor the brilliance of the analysis of post-war policy.

There is one special reason for welcoming this book, whether or not one accepts its thesis: namely, that it goes some way towards creating a just balance in the public discussion of these matters. There are many informed people who support Mr. Shonfield's thesis, and oppose the "orthodox" view of the Treasury and the City of London—for example, the vast majority of younger economists in the Universities. Yet this opposition has failed to find consistent expression in those journals which are habitually read by, and create opinion amongst, civil servants, bankers, and businessmen. It finds expression, no doubt, in Parliamentary speeches and the columns of Left-wing periodicals; but here it is discounted as being politically biased or technically not authoritative. It finds expression in occasional forays by academic economists into the weekly newspapers; but these are too infrequent, and not always very comprehensible.

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As a result, the orthodox view has enjoyed an almost complete monopoly of expression at the crucial opinion-forming level. It is supported by *The Times*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, the bank journals, and almost all the City editors and financial journalists. (The B.B.C. alone, through the Third Programme and *The Listener*, has maintained a creditably fair balance.) There are minor variations of emphasis amongst these journals, *The Financial Times* being consistently the most open-minded and *The Economist* almost farcically rigid and old-maidish. But all broadly accept the orthodox view.

The consequent lack of public argument—that is, of objective argument, as opposed to party political debate—is most conspicuous by comparison with the U.S. or Sweden, where a continuous animated discussion occurs on a markedly high level of sophistication. And it has the most dangerous consequence, to which Mr. Shonfield himself repeatedly draws attention. Vital decisions are taken without any adequate or thorough prior debate, in a spirit of what he rightly calls ignorant insouciance. This book is to be strongly recommended, not only for its intrinsic merits, but as an overdue contribution from an authoritative writer to the discussion of Britain's political and economic future.

C. A. R. Crosland

America South

The Deep South Says "Never." By John Bartlow Martin. *Gollancz*. 16s.

"In politics you must never say never," so Napoleon III once rebuked his dogmatic minister, Rouher. And it is usually desirable to take with a good deal of scepticism, in a democratic polity, the most fervent declarations of unalterable resolve. But the case is altered, not only if you really mean "never" and believe that you can make your "never" stick, but if you can make the other side *see* that you mean "never" and force them to realise that their faith or scepticism is not of the same quality as your passionate affirmation. It is the implication of this thoughtful and frightening book that the Deep South *does* mean its "never" and that the North has taken it too much for granted that the "never" meant "sometime" and probably quite soon. The comforting belief that the Deep South *must* see sense, *must* stop trying to contract out of the modern world, that each year more and more schools would be desegregated, all the illusions of the "comes silent flooding in the main" type, seem less plausible than they did a year or two ago, and much less plausible than they did when the Supreme Court overthrew the doctrine of "equal but separate" facilities on the sound but nearly revolutionary ground, that separation and equality were and must be incompatible. The Supreme Court was right; it was also, or so most people thought, wise in not rushing things, in not demanding immediate compliance. The decision was the voice of righteousness, the method the way of reasonableness, of the great political virtue of prudence. So it seemed in 1954. So it does not seem so certainly in 1958. For if desegregation has been more or less accepted in the border states, in Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, it has not been accepted even in such "advanced" southern states as North Carolina and Virginia, and what the Supreme Court has declared to be part of the "supreme law of the land" is boldly and complacently defied almost in sight of the Supreme Court Building and of the Lincoln Memorial.

It is the first of several great virtues in this book that it makes it easy to accept the fact that, for millions of white Southerners, "never" now really means *never*. What might have happened if the decision of 1954 had called for immediate action no one now can tell. The South was stunned as well as shocked and it *might* have surrendered to the majesty of the law, sullenly, if perhaps in some places with resentful violence. Now, most of the South intends to fight delaying actions with all the weapons at its command, legal and para-legal, and the end is not in sight. In the interval since the decision, wills have hardened, hopes of successful resistance have grown firmer. The battle that might have been brief will be long and bitter and while it is easy to say "the South *can't* win," it is much harder to see how and when it will be coerced into surrender. For coercion it will be, since persuasion —in terms that move the mind of the South—has ceased to be tried.

True, the churches have shown in places more courage and more fidelity to the spirit of the New Testament than many (including myself) expected, but the spirit of the Old Testament, of the rights and duties of a chosen people, has also manifested itself and it is not accidental that organised resistance to desegregation, to equality for the "nigras," is often associated with anti-Semitism. The South, thrown back on itself, is reaching out and back to the old theories of racial superiority and "purity" that led to destruction in the years "before the War" and (what we incline to forget) were popular in the years after the First World War—when the

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virtues of the Nordic race were preached and believed in—in far wider regions of the United States than the South. It is one of the few weaknesses of this most admirable book that it is too little historical in its reporting. A fanatic like Judge Brady of Mississippi is preaching to a population already conditioned to believe him, already listening to "ancestral voices prophesying war"—and a war that these listeners think that they must and can win. They will wear down the North; the North will learn as "the nigras" pour in, the realities of the racial situation. It won't be enough to preach liberty, equality, fraternity; it will be a different matter when these abstract virtues have to be practised, in Chicago, in Philadelphia, even in San Francisco or Los Angeles.

For there was some justice in the gibe of a defender of white supremacy quoted here. "I think the Southern people have been very patient with our good Northern brethren. They've got the answer and we've got the problem." And as Negroes *do* pour out of the South into the North, the sincerity of Northern egalitarianism is being tested. A "liberal" lawyer who knows that, if he sends his children (as he should) to his neighbourhood public school, they will be swamped by Negro children three or four years behindhand in academic rating, barely housebroken, and with, as adolescents, a habit of violence that arouses natural alarm, may decide that he doesn't believe in desegregation as much as all that and send his children to a private school or simply move out to an all-white suburb. But the poor white, North or South, cannot just move out and he resents the juxtaposition as much as do his economic betters. To pretend that there are no serious problems of integration is as silly as believing in England that you can legislate "parity of esteem" for schools when those who can manage it (including Labour M.P.s) contract out of the system when it threatens what they think the due of their children.

But it is not the rational, if selfish, fears of the whites that are the most effective barriers. If that were all that stood in the way, lavish use of federal money, the improvement of the economic position of the Negro, the adroit and tactful introduction of Negro children to the necessary disciplines of urban life would all work to solve the problem in time, and not perhaps a very long time.

But behind the rational, not always fictitious or factitious reasons given for opposing desegregation, lies a deeper emotion. There is the conditioned reflex of three hundred years of automatic legal superiority. There is a deep and sad truth in the dictum of Thomas Sancton: "every white man is at heart a sahib." He may fight the temptation, but most white men in the South feel, naturally and innocently, that it is not a temptation that they are succumbing to, but a truth that they are recognising and acting on. To visit the Deep South, as I have done several times in recent years, is to feel the reality of this conviction of the rightness of segregation and of superiority, for though white men may *talk* merely of "recognising differences," they *feel* it as the recognition of superiority. It is a natural feeling and it is revealed with great skill and candour here. The demagogues described and reported on are not all scoundrels, though some are; they are not all mad, though some may be; they are human beings faced with a painful readjustment that, being human, they wish to avoid and so begin by refusing to recognise. *How* is the average Southerner to accept, with goodwill, or at all, a kind of imposed equality against which all his experience, as he interprets it, protests?

I can remember pondering this question in a house lavishly reconstructed to be a model of an "ante-bellum" mansion, more lavish and more Southern probably, in this age, than it ever was "before the War." No Negro, or even any overwhelmingly white "coloured man," had ever entered that house except as a slave or a servant. The nearby university had never, except possibly during Reconstruction, ever known a Negro

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4 Modern Ghosts

E. J. DINGWALL *and* T. H. HALL

Few indeed of the flood of books on psychical research are of much help to students called on to deal with an actual case of haunting or poltergeist phenomena. This book, by two experienced investigators, gives some idea of the problems which have to be faced.

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student. And this separation *is* "the Southern way of life."

It is a remarkable feat of social observation and a remarkable feat of literary skill that Mr. Martin has managed both to convey this spontaneous attitude without adopting a *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner* attitude, or falling back on pharisaical reflections of moral superiority. He can understand the not necessarily wicked reluctance of the whites to come into a strange and uncomfortable new world; he can make comprehensible if not admirable the silence or worse of some professional Southern liberals; and he can convey the resolution of the Negro to stand erect even if that means casting his shadow over the white man's sacred plot. The heat, the strain suffered, the genuine distress of Southern educational leaders who, as one of them recently said to me, have only just succeeded in getting the elements of a good school system for black and white and now see the whole painfully-reared structure threatened, all this is admirably conveyed as is the atmosphere of covert civil war. It is not easy to be hopeful of a quick, easy "liberal" solution—and this in a world where, as *Pravda* reminded all Americans, *Sputnik* daily passed over Little Rock and the federal troops at the High School.

D. W. Brogan

Redressing the Balance

The Shaping Spirit: Studies in Modern English and American Poets. By A. ALVAREZ. *Chatto and Windus.* 15s.

THIS is an extraordinarily suggestive book; and it is a pity that it is not a little more, for there is not one of its many suggestions that is not worth worrying out a little farther. However, it advertises itself as studies in modern poets, not a treatise on modern poetry, and the outspoken informality of these essays is very much part of their nature. The time has probably not yet come to make a frontal attack on its central theme. For it has a central theme—Anglo-American poetic relations in the early part of this century. The situation is probably unique; we are always hearing of the new world redressing the balance of the old in the political sense, but I cannot think of any other time before when it has happened in literature. The distinctively modern note in modern poetry has been largely the creation of two writers—Eliot and Pound; both Americans, and both, in different degrees, accepted now as landmarks in English poetical history. Eliot indeed has been absorbed into the English literary tradition. Pound has not, and with good reason; yet the diversions, by-passes, and no-road signs that Pound has erected have been the guide of most subsequent travellers, English as well as American. Meanwhile a whole poetic literature has been developing in America, on similar lines, but without much direct influence from these elderly expatriate masters; and—as this is Mr. Alvarez's central point—the need which drove these two writers to see the literary scene as they did has been largely unfelt by English poets. The conscious modernity, the "Make It New" feeling, has been largely an American need. Yeats, the greatest poetic genius of our century, was largely untouched by it; so was Lawrence; so was Graves; and so, after a not very prolonged age of technical anxiety are most of the poets writing to-day.

Most of this deliberate novelty was achieved in the name of "tradition." But tradition, as understood by Eliot, and still more by Pound, is a word used in a highly Pickwickian sense. It involved a re-writing of literary history in a new way to suit the needs of the moment. One is reminded of what is supposed to happen at some American colleges—"As from 1030 hours to-morrow there will be a tradition that...." But things like the Imagist manifesto and the doctrines of Eliot's early essays validate themselves only in practice. Their justification was "Mauberley" and "The Waste Land." The doctrines in question have now pretty well got down to the secondary-school level, which means that they will be formally refuted to-morrow or the day after by the next wave of critical consciousness. Meanwhile they have imposed themselves, and nothing will ever be quite the same again.

This is the background to Mr. Alvarez's essays, though some of the remarks above are more my responsibility than his. He does not, fortunately, write "explications", since there are plenty already, and the commonplaces of defensive exegesis, which is what much of the criticism of modern poetry has been, really do not need repeating. To deny oneself the commonplace might make it very hard to say anything new about Eliot, but what Mr. Alvarez has to say is extremely fresh and vigorous, and at the same time just. He emphasises the fact that Mr. Eliot has always had a "fine mind" in the conventional University sense; that the striking originality of his criticism comes out of a perfectly regular academic education. This has resulted in a body of poetry of the utmost formal perfection, decorum, and completeness. Each poem has been an achievement so complete that there has been nothing left for anyone else to

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develop. Hence the smallness of his direct poetical influence. Would-be imitators have been driven to learn from his theories and his sources. He remarks, too, on the extremely literary nature of Eliot's poetry, the constant, deliberate control of diction and rhythm, the rare power to use pastiche and poetical learning, not for mimicry, but for his own purpose. "He uses tradition; Yeats was in it."

With this conscious discipline Mr. Alvarez contrasts Yeats's magnificent acceptance of fallibility; his acceptance of the fierce tension between "rage and generosity, impotence and desire, between, often, an attitude and truthfulness." And he rightly, as I believe, sees Yeats's greatness in this, in his belonging to the tradition of Shakespeare and Donne, rather than in the reference to his elaborate symbolic system.

There is no need to quarrel with the essay on Pound; but it ought to be more astringent. Of course his influence has been enormous, and the achievement admirable, within its limits. But the limits, both of quality and quantity, are much narrower than most people who have tried to cope with Pound at all are willing to admit. The bad is much worse, the gap between professions and achievements much wider, the element of sheer flummery and bamboozling much greater than Mr. Alvarez suggests. On the other hand, the essay on Auden seems an admirable piece of judicial criticism. It gives the liveliest appreciation of the wit, the inventiveness, and the technical brilliance, the sense of contemporaneity that prevents his verse from ever being dull; and records at the end an apparent lack of the central core of knowledge that we find in the great poets, the creative effort to know and judge their own experience. I believe that this sort of judgment is one that time is not likely to alter very much. In other essays there are some helpful pointers to what is good in Hart Crane, and a useful sort of exposition of what Wallace Stevens is about. But it would be nice if someone could write of Wallace Stevens in such a way as to give a real *feeling* of his virtues to those who do not feel them already. The essay on Lawrence's poetry does not tell us very much; or rather it tells us that the merits are pretty well what we knew them to be, but that Mr. Alvarez likes them more than many have done. In the last chapter there is an excellent, appreciative, but genuinely critical passage on Robert Frost—a poet so good that criticism can only bring out his quality the more clearly, and so much a loved institution that he rarely gets it.

This last chapter tries to make some generalisations about the Anglo-American situation; and naturally some of it has been said before. But Mr. Alvarez brings out particularly clearly the need of the American poet to create a personal manner of his own, the impossibility, in his situation, of taking anything for granted. The moral, probably, is that we ought now to recognise here the existence of two distinct literatures; two literatures that happen to have a common language, but are pretty decisively not brothers under the skin. American literature will always be more accessible to England than any other, for obvious reasons, but if we learn anything from it, it can only be as we learn from France or Germany. The civilisation from which it springs, the basic presuppositions, are too different for any direct transfusion to be possible, in spite of the constant to-and-fro movement across the Atlantic. And for the American, the whole English literary heritage will come more and more to represent the classical past of his language; an inescapable background, but with little direct reference to his daily experience. This is a whole new cultural situation that must some day receive a great deal more examination than it has been possible to give it up to now.

Graham Hough

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A Problematic Lot

The Conscience of the Rich. By C. P. Snow. *Macmillan.* 15s.

Four Black Cars. By Stephen Barlay and Peter Sasdy. *Putnam.* 15s.

No Bedtime Story. By Mary Crawford. *Putnam.* 12s. 6d.

The Mountain is Young. By Han Suyin. *Cape.* 18s.

Company of Cowards, By Jack Schaefer. *Deutsch.* 11s. 6d.

No one can complain that this month's novels are unconcerned with the present-day world, with current problems and morality. In their various quiet ways they are a highly problematical lot. Most of them have chosen a moral—in its widest sense political—situation, something like Hungary or witch-hunting, that concerns us all closely if not yet intimately, that hovers in the daily sky above us if it has not yet come in at the door. This is as true of the giant among them, *The Conscience of the Rich,* which deals with the outlook and morality of the 'thirties, as it is of the slighter, more directly contemporary novels; for we are shown the 'thirties as only the eyes of twenty years after can see them: with their political morality in place, their mistakes and innocent idealism and guilty avoidance of unpleasantness seen through the disillusioning filter of the next two decades. This massive but soft-spoken book (another of the Lewis Eliot novels, with Lewis as narrator only, and scarcely coming into the plot at all except as occasional *deus ex machina* and universal uncle) seems to keep underplaying its own importance, softening and almost shying away from the points it has to make, so eager is it not to point out anything specific but simply to say: This is what happened: out of the world it produced, make what you can of it.

And there is plenty to make. The novelist social-historian, as opposed to the social gossip, is able to give an age's flavour without any obviously "period" motifs at all: almost without description. Indeed, the most satisfactory period flavours are often pounded in the stark pestle of the novelist's own immediate experience: from facts, attitudes, states of mind, unconscious-looking declarations that only in the light of later experience come to look pregnant and purposeful. The pattern of events is seldom clear while the events are happening; still less the pattern of morality. And the moral and political pattern of the 'thirties is peculiarly complicated by the fact that where, in those simpler days than ours, there were two extremes of outlook you could label "left" and "right," two opposed poles called "fascist" and "anti-fascist," politics have proved less simple since then, and opposites very much less opposite. To show this, with an irony so unstressed you barely notice it for the first half of the book, C. P. Snow has taken what is, after all, a hackneyed method of popularising the movement of history—has traced it through the fortunes of a family; but with none of the popular tricks, none of the usual landmarks—jazz tunes, newspaper gossip, current names; he has not even used the conversational idiom of the period, very noticeably. The March family is a fine piece of re-creation: rich Jewish bankers settled prosperously in England since the 18th century, their orthodoxy is at last beginning—like their financial importance—to crumble: marriages disappoint, new professions are adopted, the old family self-sufficiency—like the famous March "Friday nights," where the family comes together in dozens, as it has done since the first Friday in England, two hundred years back—is beginning to be questioned by the young. One of Leonard March's children marries outside the faith, another within the faith but outside the family's circle of loyalty. A Communist within the family, ready to risk even the March good name for political reasons, means the end of the March solidarity. The scandal that results is not very explosive: just the dismissal of an elderly minor politician, the faint but unjust smearing of an honourable name. A novelist less sure of his subject would have followed drama with counter-drama: a suicide, or at least a family row. Sir Charles makes mere disappointment far more moving. The book pauses, perfectly satisfactorily, in mid-air: as indeed the middle 'thirties paused before the explosion of the world.

Politics again: the Hungarian rising is the theme of two more novels. One is the story reported, day by day, fact by fact, inch by painful inch of the way, by two men who fought in it; yet it sounds novelettish and unconvincing. The other sets the same tale in an imaginary country, sees it through a child's eyes; and the woman who writes it, if one is to go by her biography on the book's jacket, never saw street fighting in her life: yet every word of it rings true. *Four Black Cars* is a joint effort—a thing that makes artistic nonsense in so personal and individual a form as the novel; and you can hear the joint authors' joint ideas rattling about like peas in a jam-pot. George Mikes vouches for its authenticity; and I am prepared to accept that every word of it could be factually true. But this doesn't make it ring true artistically, doesn't make it seem to matter: and yet it did matter, even to outsiders far away, who had never seen street fighting; which just goes to show that the most heroic events on earth can seem trivial, if wrongly treated (as, indeed, vice versa).

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No Bedtime Story sees the same rising—any rising, but the pattern is the Hungarian one—through the eyes of a small boy, Jacko, whose mother is killed on the first day of fighting and who is thus made responsible for his small sister Vicky. Christine and Banger, an ill-assorted pair of lovers, and a small ailing baby thrust on the improvised family, take to the road of refugees at last—desperate, disconnected, clinging together for warmth rather than protection in the haphazard cross-country flight. The child's voice has caught the authentic horrors: neither mock-tough nor mock-innocent, he faces what adults cannot with the rather sedate defences of his age. This is faultless, if miniature, allegory.

Han Suyin must be the most exasperatingly talented, or talentedly exasperating, woman novelist writing to-day: her exuberant, wide-flung energy, her startling grasp of large tracts of human experience (if only quantitative, geographical tracts—last novel it was Malaya, impressively assembled through an enormous number of characters; this time it is Nepal), harnessed to such a lush, overgrown, and altogether coy and embarrassing style that the critic—this critic, anyway—is divided between admiration and distaste. For all her technical skill she has not yet learnt the basic fictional need to stand aside, at moments; not to become too pointedly, personally involved in her characters and in their behaviour. She flings her sympathies at one until, out of sheer contrariness, one prefers her anti-heroes and anti-heroines; and one seems to be dealing, not with an artist, but with a woman full of warmth, and personal affront, and pique and prejudice and sometimes of goodnature. With something of Lawrence, something of the glossy magazines, an extraordinary mixture of gold and tinsel about her, her method is as esoteric as her background. *The Mountain is Young* is, like all she writes, overwritten, and, at nearly 600 pages, about a third too long. Yet what energy, what fire, what sheer animal spirits! One can imagine her starting a new novel at four in the morning, like George Sand (or her legend), and having, perhaps, rather the same sort of verve, and of literary affectation.

After all this sprawling femininity, it is a relief to find a neat, dry, compact little novel on a single theme, with a few characters satisfactorily disposed of within a very few pages, and a general air of purposeful advancement and action. *Company of Cowards* is a small masterpiece: its subject, courage—the nature of courage and the reasons why it may, at a particular moment, fail. Jack Schaefer is a writer of good westerns—those excellent trainers, in film or fiction, for writing of any kind in which pace and excitement count first, and brief, vivid characterisation counts second; and he has used an old Civil War legend that Lincoln's army included a company of officers disgraced for cowardice, and given a chance to work out their salvation, to make an exciting story of fighting and Indians, and an even more exciting moral dilemma. The old silent values of the West take over in the end, as the strange hero sets out to start his life over again, redeemed, honourably discharged, with nothing but a horse in the way of property, or friends, or family.

Isabel Quigly

Laudable Anomaly

The House of Lords and Contemporary Politics. 1911–1957. By P. A. Bromhead. *Routledge & Kegan Paul.* 30s.

"When in the early part of 1958, world opinion was preoccupied with the problems of nuclear disarmament, Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were concentrating on the passage of a bill to reverse the Wensleydale judgment of 1856 and to permit the creation of peerages for life": this extract from a future Anglo-Saxon chronicle—and chronicle is the appropriate form of historical writing for Dark Ages—will serve to introduce Mr. Bromhead's excellent and comprehensive study of the oddest legislative body in the world, the British House of Lords. Despite its rather precise title and its occasional use of statistics—mostly very dubious statistics since peers are hard to classify—this is a book that deserves to be read by all those who find it fascinating to speculate on why it is that politics lends itself so poorly to logical analysis, and to what extent the democratic assumptions that Britons hold about their own politics are falsified when one observes them more closely.

It is true that we have come a long way—and the two Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949 have merely translated reality into law—from the time when the House of Lords could seriously be thought of as a check upon the possible tyranny of elected governments. For being such, it was praised where one might least expect it: by that vocal revolutionary Patrick Henry, in the Virginia convention called to ratify the new Constitution of the United States: "Compare this with your Congressional checks..." exclaimed the Virginian patriot, "Have you a resting place like the British Government? Where is the rock of your salvation?"

Patrick Henry was doubly wrong—wrong

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about the future of the House of Lords and wrong about the obstructive capacities of certain elements in the American Constitution. But the idea that the House of Lords might in some way prevent an elected government from fulfilling a popular "mandate" still haunts the British Left, and explains the hostility with which all attempts at its reform (including the present one) have met from the Labour Party; if membership in the Lords could be justified on democratic grounds, it would be hard to resist the claim to greater powers.

In fact, the admission of Life Peers will not affect the argument from democracy, since although the House will function better for the addition of a number of extra Socialist members, they will not owe their presence there to any form of election. But there is a sense in which Patrick Henry was right, in that he argued that what made the House of Lords reliable as a check was its "self-love"—its own interests and opinions separate from those of any constituent body. And the modern development of party has made this more important than ever: "In the modern world, dominated as it is (some people might even say 'suffocated') by committees and associations and organisations, there is a positive merit in the presence in the Legislature of some persons who do not owe their seats to the favour of any association or institution or group whatever." And the possibility of an occasional intervention on a particular topic by some well-informed but normally otherwise-engaged peer, which helps to give the all-important "general" debates in the Lords their particular utility and vitality at a time when the machine-dominated Commons is so lacking in talent and personality, makes one reluctant to see even the "backwoodsmen" got rid of for good.

There is, of course, something odd in the fact that, to use a phrase of one of its most eminent members, Lord Samuel, "this is the only institution in the world which is kept going by the persistent absenteeism of the great majority of its members"—though an exception might have been made for the Convocation of the University of Oxford. But provided the nucleus that does the work (*i.e.*, the sixty or so professional politicians who provide, as Mr. Bromhead shows, its real core) are ready and willing to carry the burden, both the detailed revision of legislation and general debates can take place as well in the House of Lords as anywhere else, and with little danger of challenging that holy of holies—responsible government, using this in its technical sense of government responsible to the House of Commons.

Some people believe that, even without Life Peers, ordinary peers of the first creation do the work and that the hereditary element is already mainly ornamental. This is untrue; on the Conservative side, the bulk of the work is done by peers who owe their seats to what is curiously called the "accident of birth" (as though becoming an M.P. were not accidental but predestined). This is so because although many eminent men are raised to the peerage in each decade, the range of choice is very limited—oddly limited. Ex-ministers and other ex-M.P.s often on the verge of retirement, business-men with other heavy calls in their time, or service-chiefs, who rarely speak except on their services —these form the bulk of them. Physicians occasionally, but not physicists; bishops, by law, of course, and judges of appeal, but not other clerics, nor university heads, nor the eminent in other professions; no economist except for Keynes; and no historian since Macaulay. Will the life-peerage net be cast wider?

Perhaps people will go on feeling that it is all right for a peer to take out an appendix but not to draw a tooth, to brew beer but not to publish books, to own a newspaper but not to edit one. There is a sort of hangover of aristocracy and one can understand the feelings of our modern egalitarians—those British socialists who may get little from Marx but have swallowed Tom Paine hook, line, and sinker, and cannot get off the hook. Mr. Bromhead's statistics suggest that they will have to get rid of a great deal more than the House of Lords before they make Britain a democracy in their sense. The House of Lords is no more aristocratic than the British Conservative Party which has been the normal majority party for over forty years—and perhaps still is: "Ten of the fourteen members of the Cabinet in November, 1956, who sat in the Commons, are closely related, either themselves or by marriage, to holders of British hereditary titles, and two of the four others figure in Burke's *Landed Gentry*. It could be plausibly stated that the Cabinet did not include a single middle-class Englishman, except perhaps Mr. Butler." All very exasperating no doubt for, say, Mr. A. J. P. Taylor—but he is probably high up on Mr. Gaitskell's list of life-peers . . . or isn't he?

Max Beloff

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About Our Authors

Erskine B. Childers has sent us the following biographical sketch of himself:

"Erskine B. Childers is twenty-nine. He is Irish, but has spent most of his adult life abroad, studying and travelling in the United States, Latin America, Australia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. A freelance writer on world affairs, he also broadcasts frequently on Radio Eireann. Until ENCOUNTER's Editors asked him to write something about himself, his only biographical worry had been his name. A source of endless confusion in Ireland, where he now lives with his Australian photographer-wife, it is identical with that of his father, a De Valera Cabinet Minister, and his grandfather, who wrote *The Riddle of the Sands* and was executed in the Irish civil war.

At seventeen, he ran away from his name, and spent a year working on a new international school in Arizona. (He had spent two years at Trinity College, Dublin.) After Arizona, he resumed studies in political science at Stanford University, California. Becoming involved in international university work, he travelled in Latin America, and was elected vice-president of the American N.U.S., a full-time post. He represented U.S. students at conferences in London and Paris and Prague; organised educational exchanges, seminars with German students, survey missions to Asian and African universities.

Growing interest in the problems of Afro-Asian nationalism next took him and his wife to Australia, which he saw as a stepping-stone to South Asia for a would-be journalist. Working for an airline in Sydney by day, he began journalism by night as contributing editor to *Voice*, a monthly review. In 1954 he and his wife left ship at Colombo with rucksacks, sleeping-bags, and savings in a moneybelt. They journeyed overland to Dublin, studying political, economic, and social conditions in Ceylon, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and westward. After a bread-and-butter year in an advertising agency in Dublin, he took up freelance writing and radio work. In 1956, the urge to learn more at first hand took him and his wife to the Middle East, just as the Sinai-Suez crisis broke. Spent seven months in the area, again finding the extraordinary advantage of an Irish passport for journalism. He is now writing a book on Middle Eastern challenges to the West."

YVES BONNEFOY. One of France's most gifted younger poets. Born 1923, lives in Paris. Has studied mathematics, philosophy, and the history of art. Has published two volumes of poetry, and has translated into French several plays of Shakespeare, notably Hamlet and Julius Caesar.

Norman Birnbaum writes of himself:

"I was born in New York City in 1926 and was educated there (a hard school, but a useful one), at Williams College, and at Harvard University, where I also taught. I came to Europe in 1952 to do research on the Reformation, and have been at the London School of Economics since 1953. In addition to my historical studies, I am also writing something on the question of contemporary ideologies. I am an editor of *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* (Paris) and of *Past and Present* (London). I find academic life in Great Britain very pleasant and shall probably be here for a while. To the left of most of ENCOUNTER's contributors, I am somewhat surprised to find myself in their company."

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ANSWERS

1 *James Joyce*, "Finnegan's Wake."
2 *Thomas Hood*, "Miss Kilmansegg."
3 *Charles Dickens*, "Sketches by Boz."
4 *Benjamin Disraeli*, In a letter to Mrs. Wyndham Lewis.

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